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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE INTEREST OF EDMONTON CLUB WOMEN IN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND WELFARE, 1919-1939

BY

SHELLEY ANNE MARIE BOSETTI-PICHE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1990

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Interest of Edmonton Club Women in Education, Health and Welfare, 1919-1939" submitted by Shelley Anne Marie Bosetti-Piché in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History of Education.

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DEDICATION

For those whose good opinion I value most,
my parents, Rino and Anne Bosetti,
my husband, Terry Piché,
and our children, Matthew and Gillian

ABSTRACT

This dissertation was centered upon an examination of the ideas and roles of urban women's organizations on specific reform issues of the inter-war period related to the well-being of children and the education of adults. The six organizations selected for the study were the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, the Edmonton Home Economics Association, the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League, and the Women's University Club of Edmonton.

One chapter outlined the transformation in educational philosophy, policy and practice that occurred in Alberta schools during the 1920s and 1930s. Subsequent chapters related to the Edmonton club women's interest in the formulation of a child-centered perspective in the Alberta school system, in provincial health care, and in child welfare arrangements. Another chapter examined the club women's involvement in adult education.

The study concluded, first, that despite the differences in orientation between the six women's organizations, there was a high degree of consensus with respect to child-centered reform and adult education. Second, these urban women consistently monitored education in the province and often attempted to use the school as a center for reform activity. Third, the inter-war ideas and initiatives of the Edmonton women's organizations were tied to the broader, Canadian child-centered reform movement. Similarly, their efforts to educate their own memberships surfaced at the genesis of the adult education movement in Canada. Fourth, women's organizations were a part of the middle class female cultural experience of the early twentieth century. Through the vehicle of organizations, women were able to become involved in adult and child-related concerns.

Their methods included the use of influential social connections, education, advocacy, and action-oriented initiatives.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the years immediately following provincehood in Alberta a number of women's organizations were established in Edmonton thereby affording some women of the city, mainly middle class ones, an opportunity to participate more visibly and effectively in the reform movement of the day. In the thirty year period beginning in 1890, numerous issues rose to the forefront of Canadian consciousness. Ultimately many of these concerns surfaced in arenas of political action and constituted the main agenda for social, economic, and political change in the period. The range of issues was broad and reflected concerns, in some instances, apparent throughout Canada and the United States and, in other instances, visible mainly as a sectional or regional interest of western Canada. Whereas formerly the interest, involvement, and influence of women were minimal or at best hidden or obscured, they found expression and acceptance within western Canada in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Not only was this an era of profound social change, but it also was a time when women began to assume a more prominent role in helping to shape and direct the nature of such change.

As Brown and Cook have noted, "Canada, in the twenty-five years between the election of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the resignation of Sir Robert Borden, was a country being transformed."[1] In support of their claim they point to remarkable population growth, increases in foreign trade and foreign investment, expanding wheat markets, new found sources of mineral wealth, and changing modes of transportation due to the completion of two transcontinental railways and the greater availability of automobiles. However, as Brown and Cook observe, "the new Canada that emerged . . . was not just a bigger edition of the old Canada. It was new in quality and spirit."[2]

There was a new ethnic mix in Canadian life precipitated by the rapid addition of two million settlers, many of whom were from the non-English speaking nations of the world. As these immigrants found a place, often in rural communities of western Canada, they began to contribute to the linguistic, religious and sectional differences of the country. Although many of these new Canadians settled on the land as farmers in western Canada, and even though agricultural products, especially wheat, thrived on the world market, the rural-urban balance in Canada shifted demonstrably during this period. By 1921 the proportions were almost equal. It was apparent that Canada was becoming an urbanized nation. With urbanization came industrialization. Both developments caused major adjustment and reorientation in Canadian society. Various interest groups, noticeably labor and farmer groups, expressed their frustrations and unrest in major revolts which stirred the nation in the immediate post World War I years. Large corporations, benefiting from foreign investment, became evident. While they encouraged Canadians, especially the people of Quebec to stay at home, these corporate, industrial enterprises threatened the traditionally rural French Canadian way of life. Thus we see that major portions of Canada experienced turmoil as the established ethnic mix and related way of life was disrupted by changing socio-economic conditions.

The rapid growth of cities produced attendant problems. Numerous voices were heard, some isolated, some part of emergent activist groups, pointing to the need to address the plight of the poor, urban resident. Squalor, neglect, disease and other ills of city life became the focal point of attention. The social gospel, growing largely out of the interest and activity of the country's Protestant churches in these negative and undesirable conditions of the period, became visible as a contributor to reform and renewal. As Allen notes, "fundamentally the social gospel rested on the premise that Christianity was a social religion."[3] When social problems became manifest to the pronounced degree that they did at the turn of the century, many of Canada's protestant church leaders became critical voices, decrying the undesirable conditions and fostering action plans to remedy the ills. Howell observes that

> Protestant social agencies were well-established by World War I. Poverty, bad housing, illiteracy, juvenile delinquency, crime, prostitution and alcoholism were social problems which the social gospel addressed simultaneously through a host of committees, leagues, departments and wings of Christian organizations. The emergence of social action groups was significantly supported by protestant religious zeal. All denominations had their boards of Moral and Social Reform; young people's organizations were upgraded and expanded; the YMCA and its later offspring, the Student Christian movement also carried the message of the social gospel. These were the vanguard organizations which sought social purity under the influence of the social gospel.[4]

Not all reform attention was centered on urban conditions. Agrarian interests were beginning to organize in an effort to preserve the rural way of life and to ensure a measure of equality in social, political and economic realms as a vital means of halting or, at least, or retarding, the further erosion of the rural way of life. Despite the belief of many in the alleged moral superiority and attractiveness of this lifestyle, it was not sufficiently powerful to withstand the pull of cities and their related sources of livelihood. The lure of the city continued to draw young men from the farms as it did from towns and villages.[5]

According to Vernon Fowke, the years from 1912 to 1921 highlight the "high-water mark of agrarian success."[6] In Alberta, the United Farmers of Alberta chose intervention as a political party in order to provide redress for some of the ills of rural and western Canada. Eastern dominated old-line political parties and financial institutions had alienated much of this farm element in the west. Years later, the commissioners of the Rowell-Sirois Report summarized the developments in agrarian and labor sectors of post World War I Canada as follows:

> the position of some labour and agricultural groups improved [during the War]. However, prosperity and good fortune are always, to a great extent, relative. Psychological factors played a large part in the revolt. There was general alarm and resentment, as well as actual suffering, over the steep and continuous rise in prices. There was widespread evidence of large profits having been reaped from War prosperity. . . . The inequality of rewards and sacrifices was real and striking. Popular indignation at these inequities and misunderstanding of the causes behind them made the inequalities seem even greater and more sinister than they really were.[7]

Rural reform groups were not limited in their discontent to the economic inequities and lack of political power that they were experiencing. They identified other factors such as inadequate or inaccessible health facilities, poor roads and communications systems, and the inadequacy of rural schooling. For many, the one-room rural school epitomized the inequalities of rural life and, according to Wilson, "the farm organizations' leaders throughout the prairies, and the women's auxiliaries in particular, were united in their acute dissatisfaction with the system of rural schools."[8] At a time, following World War I, when the need for education was readily apparent for the success of the future generation, it was obvious to those in the farm organizations that their children, as in many other respects, were seriously deprived in their schooling. The teachers were judged to be inadequately prepared and experienced, inspection was inconsistent and supervision absent, new program areas such as manual training and domestic science along with physical education, music, art and medical inspection were, generally, unavailable.[9]

In the concerns voiced by these agrarian reformers about school and children it is possible to recognize another phenomenon which was characteristic of Canada and of much of the western world of the period. Sutherland, in his book *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* provides a detailed look at the ideas and the reforms which were associated with a growing interest in children. Whether in the case of the rhetoric of the social gospelers or the committee work of the United Farm Women of Alberta, the creation of departments for neglected children or the interest of educators in the ideas of John Dewey, or whether in the encouragement of medical inspection programs or the effort to promote "motherhood" as a subject in the school curriculum, the underlying element and common foundation was the same; there was an interest in paying greater attention to the child and its proper care, nurturing, education and development.

According to Sutherland, middle class men and women led the reform movement. These same people dominated the old and new professions which looked after children and families. As early as 1897 the National Council of Women came into existence and helped, among other things, to improve the health, education, and welfare of children. While organizations such as this looked at and helped the child, they did not ignore the need to help mothers, especially in improving home conditions and child rearing practices. J.J. Kelso, a leading children's advocate of the time, encouraged Canadians to raise "the standards of home life to a level that would ensure for every child a fair chance to attain self-reliant and self-respecting citizenship."[10] As Reese notes of similar reformers in the United States, these middle class female reformers, believing in the superiority of their insight into and understanding of children and family life, began to evidence concern for the good of all mothers and children. One Rochester woman observed, "it is no longer my child, his rights, his comforts - but the rights and comforts of all children," since "what concerns my neighbor's child, concerns me."[11] Sutherland makes a similar point about Canadians,

> Middle-class reformers also feared that badly brought up or poorly cared for children would menace the well-being of their own more carefully reared offspring. In their efforts to help neglected, dependent, and delinquent youngsters, they displayed their belief that the children of the poor and of the working classes were in particular need of attention.[12]

At the discussion level, at least, and increasing, but gradually, in their practices, these advocates of child reform "displayed a greater and perhaps more humane concern for the conditions under which their own and other youngsters spent their early years than had their predecessors of a generation before."[13]

In highlighting developments in this child-centered movement in Canada, Sutherland points out that Canadians followed a "very ad hoc process" in their efforts "to solve newly emerged, perceived, or discovered practical problems."[14] Despite such an approach four themes or "spheres of interest" seemed to emerge. These included: "improving conditions for good family life, establishing systems of child and family welfare, transforming the educational system, and organizing a pattern of child and family health care."[15] It is useful and important to note the range and variation of interest encompassed by these four themes. Infant care, child rearing practices, temperance education, censorship of movies, supervised playgrounds, sex and family life education, mothers' pensions, proper care and placement of neglected and dependent children, suppression of prostitution rings, compulsory immigration, medical and dental inspection, introduction of kindergartens, manual training and domestic science into the curriculum and the consolidation of schools were only a few of the topics pursued by these reformers.

As thorough and informative as Sutherland's analysis and description of the child-centered reform movement in English-speaking Canada is, there remain certain areas which warrant further study. He centers much of his work on Toronto with some lesser, supporting reference to Vancouver and Winnipeg. There is room for studies of other urban centers of the period to determine whether or not they shared common interests with counterparts in Toronto. While Sutherland acknowledges the key role played by middle class women in these reform discussions and initiatives, he does not explore and report the important and distinctive role played by women's organizations in these developments.

A more recent source, albeit one focused on American school reform of the Progressive era, William Reese's *Power and the Promise of School Reform*, does provide a valuable example of a study centered on grassroots reformers including members of women's organizations in fostering school reforms in harmony with child-centered and other interests of the period. School innovation, he found, resulted from the ideas and efforts of a variety of groups including "women's organizations, parent associations, labor unions, Social Gospelers, and Populist and Socialist parties."[16] While, at times, these groups expressed conflicting views on schooling, there were times when they united behind the same initiative. As Kaestle in his analysis of Reese's work notes, people who were strongly opposed ideologically could support the same innovation for different reasons. Common to all of these reform elements was the inclination "to look to the school as a source of human betterment," and to demand more responsive schools, offering new programs.[17] Because of their central role in shaping school reform, voluntary associations such as women's organizations, according to Reese, have histories which are central and not incidental to understanding this period of educational change.[18] Apple commends Reese's work because he uncovers the place of women's groups in school reform efforts. He goes on to exphasize that

> not all of these women were the same ideologically. Some chose to fight for social reform on moral grounds because of their belief in the moral superiority of women and in feminine virtues. Others fought capitalist encroachments in the school and elsewhere because of their faith in a socialist future that would eliminate all such gender distinctions. It would be easy to dismiss such efforts as middle-class 'reformism'."[19]

Thus there is value in studying women's groups and clubs of different political and ideological persuasion to determine whether or not there was a common ground of interest and action cutting across all clubs.

In his study of women's organizations, Reese noted several features of their work which are worth identifying. Among these are the fact that, in the main, women's clubs were sympathetic to teachers; they fostered experimental programs in the schools; and their discussion, study and action programs were predominantly focused on children, schooling and the home.[20] They also stressed the need for keeping current or updated on their role as mothers and homemakers. Problematic for them, of course, were the contradictions of their interest in the poor and unfortunate while not being of the same condition and how to justify their political involvement while, at the same time, fulfilling their feminine and domestic role. According to Reese, they "altered the meaning of domesticity" in order "to warrant leaving the home to engage in public activities. Effective motherhood now required the expansion of the home's boundaries to include the entire community."[21] It was assumed by many women that they were capable of rising above personal prejudices and class backgrounds to secure the common good. It is Reese's conclusion that in spite of the mix of varied elements shaping school reform in the period, this era of change was very much a woman's movement.[22]

The observation that club women evinced a concern for all children, including those of the poor and working classes, raises an interesting point with respect to the actual class composition of women's organizations. It is generally assumed that these organizations were comprised of married, middle-aged, Anglo-Saxon members of the middle class. Gillian Weiss, a western Canadian historian, sought to test this assumption through a case study of the rank-and-file membership of five Vancouver women's organizations. By ranking the membership against the characteristics of age, marital status, education, place of birth, ethnic origin, religion, and socio-economic status, Weiss concluded that indeed, the assumptions concerning the "typical" club woman were accurate. However, such women did not form a homogeneous group, and several significant distinctions surfaced. For example, a minority were single, often employed women; many had not yet reached middle age; not all were Presbyterian and Methodist, but represented, instead, a variety of religious denominations; and they had a considerable range of educational backgrounds. Most importantly, while the majority were middle class, there also were sizeable numbers representing the working class, and moreover, it was not uncommon for such members to hold executive and committee positions.[23] Weiss acknowledged that while "attitudes, values and experience did differ from class to class," club members "nevertheless believed in all sincerity that every woman was a part of a sisterhood that transcended class divisions."[24] Perhaps this sense of "gender unity" served to soften the potentially problematic interests of club women in the children of the poor and working classes.

The connection between Canadian women's organizations and the new education movement has received recognition from Nancy Sheehan in *"National Issues and Curricula Issues: Women and Educational Reform, 1900-1930."* In this work Sheehan identified four educational issues which were of concern to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, the Women's Institutes, the United Farm Women, and the National Council of Women of Canada. The issues were sobriety, imperialism/Canadianization, health, and practical/technical education, and strikingly, each formed a vital component of the new education movement. Additionally, these issues were adopted for schools, at least at the policy level, across the entire country, a circumstance which was attributed "in no small measure to reform-oriented women."[25] The fact that women's organizations had overlapping leaderships, that members' Anglo-Saxon, protestant, middle class backgrounds were essentially the same as education officials, and that many members had former teaching experience, served to enhance the impact of women's reform organizations on educational change in Canada.[26]

Other works by Sheehan have emphasized the educational interests of women's organizations. In *"'Tea-sippers or Crusaders?' The IODE as a Women's Organization, 1900-1925,"* the IODE was characterized as an "imperial educational organization" that promoted allegiance to Britain, and its ideals and institutions, through the schools.[27] Another of Sheehan's articles, *"The IODE, the Schools and World War I,"* maintained that the public school provided the vehicle through which the IODE furthered its goal of imperial loyalty.[28] Examples of IODE sponsored school activities included essay contests, school linking and correspondence schemes between Canadian and British children, the donation of libraries, Union Jacks, and pictures of royalty, and patriotic programs for use each month and on Empire Day. That the IODE had ready access to the schools is explained by the fact that its members were themselves part of the "Canadian establishment," and the organization had its own education advisory committee comprised of top university and education department officials. Therefore, in the years before and during the War, the educational "ideas of the IODE were one with the ideas of the departments of education."[29]

In *"The WCTU and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie,"* Sheehan examined that organization's use of public schools and informal educational agencies to accomplish its temperance goals. One of Sheehan's purposes was to test the WCTU's "rhetoric of success" in assessing its own temperance programs.[30] Her analysis of the WCTU's promotion of scientific temperance instruction in schools and its use of Sunday schools and youth branches as vehicles for advancing temperance sentiment led Sheehan to conclude that the programs were largely ineffective. While the WCTU theorized that it could attract youth to temperance through the schools and other educational agencies, in practice, its programs had "little direct influence on either prohibition or its defeat."[31] Another source which, in some degree, connects the WCTU to school reform is Lyn Gough's *As Wise as Serpents: Five Women and an Organization that Changed British Columbia, 1883-1939*. In this study Gough chronicles the roles of certain WCTU leaders in shaping local education through their election to the Victoria School Board.

There is reason to believe, from two or three theses completed on Alberta women's organizations, that women in the province were important contributors to child-centered, health and education reform of the period. Additionally, from analyses of the work of such clubs as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the United Farm Women of Alberta and the Women's Institutes, it is evident that women members were anxious to further their own education and growth as well as contribute directly to the improvement of conditions for children.

Wilson, in his study of the UFWA, concluded that the farm women were important contributors to education and cultural development in Alberta, but that farmers, generally, were reticent to lend vital support to rural school reform such as the creation of the larger school unit. The first three areas of identified concentration of the UFWA, in 1916, were health, education and young people. Included among the aims of the UFWA was the stimulation of interest "in that which makes for reform in social conditions, particularly those affecting the childhood and youth of our land."[32] The courses of study pursued by UFWA members such as that set out for 1927 included the school related concerns of kindergartens and the Montessori Method as well as the child rearing practices of teaching obedience, industry, politeness and good manners. On other occasions studies were undertaken and reports given which led to encouragement of the use of the Danish Folk School and the Dalton Plan, rejection of the recitation method of teaching, creation of large units of school administration, and endorsement of the new enterprise method. From Wilson's work we can see that rural women in the UFWA were interested in educational reform, as were their urban Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba and American counterparts.

Bosetti's study on Women's Institutes in Alberta reveals that these club women, predominantly rural in residence and interest, showed similar concerns for education, the caring and rearing of children, and health. In their education work, various Institutes provided scholarships, maintained a surveillance of the curriculum, sponsored school fairs, donated school supplies and provided lunches. From this work we learn that the views of the Women's Institutes were solicited by the Minister of Education.[33] These same WI's showed similar interest in youth clubs and health-related matters in their communities.

Sheehan's study of the WCTU illustrates yet another women's group of the time engaged in reform efforts central to the well-being of the family and children. Members unabashedly sought to use the school as an agency of change. Sheehan notes that "the women were acting out of their belief that society needed reform, and that the public school was an ideal institution to lead that reform."[34] Since women had had considerable experience in the educational field, especially in public school teaching, and since the public school, in many respects, could be viewed as an extension of the home, it was natural that education would become their focus. But whatever their focus and intent, the success of the temperance women was limited by the fact that their programs were unpopular among the general populace and, therefore, were not widely implemented.

The foregoing review of societal conditions and the findings of Sutherland, Reese, Wilson, Bosetti and Sheehan provides partial justification for this study. These earlier works help establish the need for a study of Alberta's urban women in relation to the child-centered concerns of health, welfare and education in early twentieth century Alberta. There is need, as well, for an investigation of their views on their own education as adults and as contributing, significant members of a democratic society. This dissertation is centered, then, on an examination of the ideas and roles of urban women's organizations, specifically in Edmonton, on key reform issues of the period related to the well-being of children. This encompasses matters of improvement of home and family, adult education to heighten effectiveness in a democratic society for both women and men, and provision of better schooling, health care and welfare for children.

Several questions serve to guide the framing of the study and the accumulation and reporting of the data. These include the following:

> 1. Did urban club women of the early twentieth century in urban Alberta show any common concerns about societal improvement through betterment of education, health and welfare conditions of children and enrichment of adult learning opportunities and, additionally, did they share common ideas, beliefs and interests in relation to these reform concerns?
>
> 2. Did reform oriented urban club women see and attempt to use the school as a center for reform activity?
>
> 3. Did the ideas and initiatives of urban women in Alberta appear to have relevance or connection to major reform oriented developments and changes of the period?
>
> 4. Did involvement of women in the clubs of the city provide a meaningful form of public, community involvement?

Once these questions were formulated, consideration was given to questions pertaining to whether or not to focus on one Alberta urban community, how many clubs to study, which clubs to review, and what period of time to use in delimiting the investigation. Initially, focus was directed to Edmonton as the capital and as the center of influence for most of the province. In that many club women in Edmonton had direct family connection to influential government and educational leaders, the prospect of their influence seemed stronger. Six women's clubs finally were selected for study. These were the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, the Women's University Club of Edmonton, the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League, and the Edmonton Home Economics Association. The six clubs included some groups of overlapping membership and interest as well as some of distinctive membership and purpose. Through examining these organizations with both similar and dissimilar qualities of membership, belief, value and purpose, the basis was established for making relevant comparisons and contrasts. The number and variety ensured a greater degree of representativeness on the part of the women's clubs of Edmonton. Although they primarily were middle class organizations, they did, at least in the case of the Catholic Women's League, include some women of the full socio-economic spectrum. These six clubs gave voice to professional, religious, academic and patriotic interest. With the exception of the Edmonton Home Economics Association, the organizations included in this study were formed prior to the First World War. By the 1920s they operated as mature and seasoned institutions.

The first of these organizations to be established in the city was the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club which was formed in 1908 as an association of professional press women and authors. Members had to be actively involved in writing and their work published each year in order to belong.[35] The primary intention of the club was to foster high literary standards, although it dedicated a considerable portion of its time to social activities such as the entertainment of distinguished persons who visited Edmonton. Additionally, meetings were arranged to discuss questions of public concern, for the purpose of influencing the formation of public opinion. The club enjoyed a fairly prestigious standing in that it had its own meeting room in the Civic Block which had been donated by the city. In 1916, members published *Club Women's Records* which was comprised of reports on the officers and activities of nearly every women's organization situated in Edmonton. The following year, the Calgary Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club published a volume which was similar but provincial in scope.

Formed in Edmonton in 1909 as the Alberta Women's Association, this second club underwent a change of name in 1917 to the Women's University Club of Edmonton, and a further change in 1941 to the University Women's Club of Edmonton. The object of the club, as stated in its original constitution, was to promote educational interests, particularly those of Alberta women. Membership was rather exclusive, since it was confined to women residing in Alberta who were alumnae of colleges of recognized standing in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States, or who were graduates of medical and legal schools. Also eligible to membership were the wives of men who held positions of power within the educational establishment. These included the wife of the official visitor to the University of Alberta, the wife of the Minister and of the Deputy Minister of Education, and the wives of officers, members of the Senate, and faculty of the University of Alberta. The Women's University Club maintained a close association with the University, often consulting with the president and arranging for professors from various departments to speak at meetings. The club met regularly on campus at Assiniboia Hall.

An organization dedicated to the fostering of patriotism and unity among Canadians through the study of her institutions, history, arts, literature, and resources was formed in 1911 as the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton. Membership in this third organization was confined to women who were British born, British subjects, or whose husbands were British subjects, providing such women were in sympathy with the objects of the club. Although resident foreign women were debarred from membership by reason of their nationality, they were allowed to attend WCC meetings as guests of members. This club enjoyed an immediate success in terms of membership; by the time of the first annual meeting in 1912, the club boasted two hundred and sixty-five members, and in the following year that number rose to three hundred and seventy-five. However, it would seem that for the majority of members, participation was confined to attending the "invitation only" luncheons which featured guest speakers. The actual arrangements for these activities were seen to by an executive body which met on a regular monthly basis.

The Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire was formed during the Boer War for the purpose of uniting women in patriotic work, including the care of widows and children of soldiers, and the Order took a special interest in the patriotic development of school children. This organization reached the province of Alberta in 1906 with the formation of the Westward Ho! Chapter in Edmonton. Possibly the greatest impetus to the proliferation of primary chapters was the First World War. Prior to its outbreak, six chapters had been organized in Edmonton; by 1914 there were eight, and by 1918 there were twenty-five. The umbrella organization under which these primaries functioned, the "second tier" of the IODE hierarchy, was the Edmonton Municipal Chapter. This chapter, formed in 1911, was the one selected for this study because it was comprised of the executive body which both gave direction to, and acted on behalf of, the Edmonton primary chapters. The Municipal Chapter took a particular interest in educational matters even adding, from 1918 onward, the position of Educational Secretary to its executive. A provincial chapter for Alberta was formed in 1920.

The Catholic Women's League originated in England in 1906. The first Canadian unit was formed in Edmonton in 1912; it later became known as the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League. This, the fifth organization featured in the study, was created for the purpose of uniting Catholic women in the promotion of religious, educational, and charitable work. Immigrant women, and their families, were of special concern to the Senior Subdivision; members met all trains entering Edmonton in order to identify and assist all immigrant women on board. Additionally, the organization operated a hostel, Rosary Hall, which provided temporary housing and an employment bureau for both immigrant and country women who were new to Edmonton. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision carried out its work through fifteen committees, including social welfare, Rosary Hall, St. Mary's Home for Boys, Good Shepherd Home for Girls, and education. Membership in this group reached over eight hundred in the 1930s.

The Edmonton Home Economics Association was a professional society which organized in 1923. In order to attain the status of active member, individuals were required to hold the equivalent of a junior matriculation certificate as well as at least one year of training in Home Economics.[36] The organization attempted to advance a number of aims. For example, it sought to further the recognition of subjects related to the home in the curricula of schools and colleges, and it sought to secure both the establishment and standardization of professional instruction for school teachers, home makers and institutional workers. The organization was interested in guiding public opinion via popular publications and meetings. The committees through which the EHEA worked to advance its aims were education, nutrition, clothing, home making, and institutional management. This club originally was affiliated with the American Home Economics Association but ties were cut shortly after the formation of an Alberta HEA in 1935 and a Canadian HEA in 1939.

Chapter two outlines some of the major educational trends and developments in post-war Alberta schooling, with a view to establishing the context within which the education and socially-related interests of the Edmonton club women took root. Chapter three then examines the club women's specific interests in education, schooling, and the teaching profession. Chapters four and five analyze their child-centered reform endeavors in the areas of health and social welfare. Chapter six addresses the involvement of Edmonton club women in adult education. Chapter seven forms the conclusion in which the major findings of the study are presented and analyzed.

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[1] Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 1.

[2] Ibid.

[3] David F. Howell, "The Social Gospel in Canadian Protestantism, 1895 to 1925: Implications to Sport" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1980), p. 14.

[4] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[5] Leroy John Wilson, "The Education of the Farmer: The Educational Objectives and Activities of the United Farmers of Alberta and the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, 1920-1930" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1975), p. 19.

[6] Ibid., p. 15.

[7] Ibid., p. 18.

[8] Ibid., p. 20.

[9] Ibid., p. 22.

[10] Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 17.

[11] William J. Reese, Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grassroots Movements During the Progressive Era (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 51.

[12] Ibid., p. 19.

[13] Ibid., p. 20.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Reese, Power and the Promise of School Reform, p. xxi.

[17] Ibid., p. xxvii.

[18] Ibid., p. xxii.

[19] Ibid., p. xi.

[20] Ibid., pp. 44, 49.

[21] Ibid., p. 42.

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[22] Ibid., p. 62.

[23] Gillian Weiss, "The Brightest Women of Our Land: Vancouver Clubwomen, 1910-1928" in Not Just Pin Money, Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro, eds. (Victoria: Camosun College, 1984), p. 206.

[24] Gillian Weiss, "Clubwomen, Class and Social Reform in Vancouver, 1910-1928" (Unpublished manuscript, 1984).

[25] Nancy M. Sheehan, "National Issues and Curricula Issues: Women and Educational Reform, 1900-1930" in Women and Education: A Canadian Perspective, Jane S. Gaskell and Arlene Tigar McLaren, eds. (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1987), p. 235.

[26] Ibid., p. 237.

[27] Nancy M. Sheehan, "'Tea-sippers or Crusaders?' The IODE as a Women's Organization, 1900-1925" (Paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Guelph, Ontario, June, 1984), p. 9.

[28] Nancy M. Sheehan, "The IODE, the Schools and World War I" History of Education Review vol. 13, no. 1 (1984), p. 30.

[29] Ibid., p. 41.

[30] Nancy M. Sheehan, "The WCTU and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie" in Schools in the West: Essays in Canadian Educational History, Nancy M. Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, and David C. Jones, eds. (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1986), p. 194.

[31] Ibid., p. 207.

[32] Wilson, "The Education of the Farmer," p. 93.

[33] Shelley Bosetti, "The Rural Women's University: Women's Institutes in Alberta, 1909-1940" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1983), p. 148.

[34] Nancy Sheehan, "Temperance, the WCTU, and Education in Alberta, 1905-1930" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1980), p. 248.

[35] This qualification was relaxed somewhat between 1932 and 1935 because depressed market conditions had made it difficult for free lance writers to have their stories and articles accepted for publication. During this time the Club executive was granted discretionary powers in deciding whether a member who had not been able to sell the required number of stories or articles, but who had kept up with her work, would be allowed to retain active membership. Source: Records of the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, Minutes of 10 January 1932 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 78.32).

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[36] The requirement of a junior matriculation certificate and one year of training in home economics was for "active" membership in the Edmonton Home Economics Association. Women who had an interest in the work of the Association but did not possess the requirements for active membership could become "associate" members upon the approval of two-thirds of the members present at a regular meeting. However, associate members were not entitled to vote or to hold office in the organization. Source: Records of the Edmonton Home Economics Association, Constitution of 1927 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 69.272).

CHAPTER II

POST-WAR SCHOOLING IN ALBERTA: ISSUES AND CHANGES

The period between the wars was a time of remarkable growth and change in Alberta schools. It was an era of mass education as the numbers attending and staying in school increased dramatically over pre-World War I decades. Schooling had been an important interest and commitment of governments on the prairies since the time of the Haultain administration of the Territorial period. The early preoccupation of school authorities, of necessity, had centered on keeping up to the constant demand for new schools and teachers. Small school districts continually were created to accommodate the establishment of communities and pockets of settlement resulting from the arrival of immigrants. A basic curriculum was established under the direction of the Territorial Superintendent of Schools, D.J. Goggin, and remained essentially unchanged until 1912. In the main, especially in rural one-room schools, the program of studies provided little more than the rudiments of literacy and an understanding of some basic societal values.

Four years of war, coupled with a changing economy and the emergence of new ideas on the child and the role of the school in society, served to stimulate significant changes in enrolment. Whereas in 1905 Alberta's student population was less than twenty-five thousand, it had risen to far in excess of one hundred thousand by

1921. Figures 1 and 2, on the following page, depict student enrolment and school district growth in Alberta from provincehood through the end of the inter-war period. The UFA government, elected to power in 1921, advocated a policy of "Grade VIII education for every child" which served to reinforce the increasing importance attached to formal education in Alberta. With the change in school population, came a corresponding change in the focus and purpose of schooling. Efforts were made to broaden the curriculum, and to make the school experience more appealing to the interests and needs of the more diverse student body and more in harmony with the ideas of a child-centered philosophy which was gaining in visibility and acceptance. The complex interrelationship of expanding school attendance numbers, changing ideas on children, and new educational requirements for a post-war economy makes it difficult to ascribe cause and effect to any or all of these factors. Suffice it to say that there was a confluence of these developments which led to significant changes in the philosophy and purpose of Alberta schools.

Of growing importance throughout the two decades between the wars was the emergence of interest in and commitment to the ideas and practices earlier associated with the term "new education" and more typically, in the 1930s, connected to progressive education. Regardless of title, the emphasis was essentially the same and the source of ideas relatively similar. Themes such as education for democracy, interest or child-centered learning, educating the whole child, learning by doing, individualized instruction and activity learning became synonymous with the educational reform ideas being promulgated by laymen and professional educators alike. It is useful to understand the nature and influence of these ideas in Alberta during this period as they serve to provide a context for the ideas developed in subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

Figures 1 and 2

FIGURE 1. ENROLMENT GROWTH IN ALBERTA

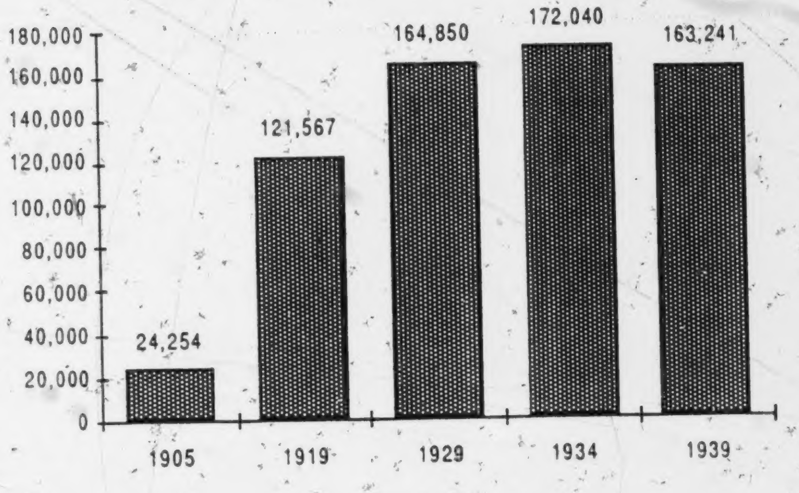
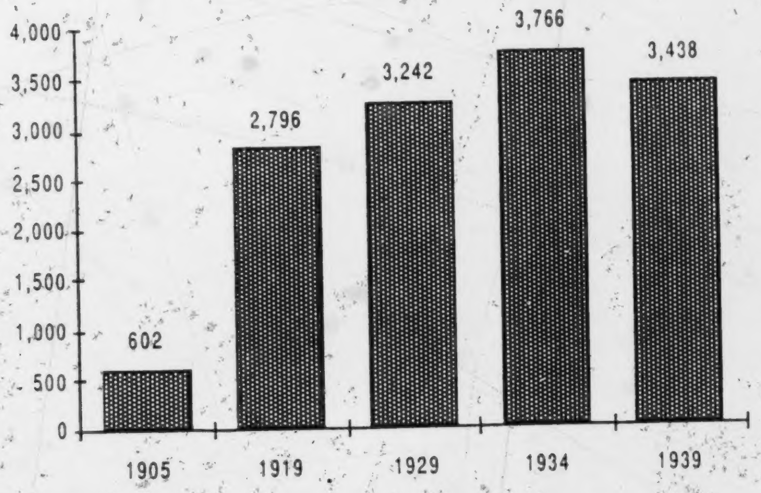


FIGURE 2. DISTRICT GROWTH IN ALBERTA



While the main impetus for educational change in accord with this child-centered philosophy can be associated with a group of professional educators in the Department of Education and the normal schools, it is important to recognize Sutherland's observation that by 1921, in Canada, there were many voices seeking to improve the circumstances of Canadian children. Some chose to do this in the arena of public schooling while others addressed the needs of children through advocacy and interest in public health and welfare. In that one of the purposes of this dissertation is to determine the extent to which members of urban women's clubs showed interest in ideas and practices associated with school reforms of the inter-war period, attention is directed first to the changes in educational philosophy, policy and practice of the period. The majority of the changes which occurred under the name of progressive education came later in the period. The schools and their leaders were slow to translate these child-centered ideas into major curriculum and methodological changes. In the case of Alberta farm women, as Wilson notes, their interest in educational reform became evident in the 1920s and served to provide support for and encouragement of changes in Alberta school policy. It is yet to be determined whether urban women's organizations displayed similar early interest in these ideas.

Patterson's work on progressive education in Alberta is helpful in providing a picture of these new ideas and practices as they affected public schooling in the province. His work underscores the observations of others, like Sutherland, who note that aspects of the new education became popular in all provinces of Canada. Prior to World War I there were some Canadians who exerted considerable efforts to engender a child-centered perspective in education.[1] They were successful in their reform efforts to a limited extent insofar as some of their ideas and policies were introduced into the schools by way of new subjects and less rigorous discipline. While the seeds were sown and evincing modest growth prior to World War I, there was as yet, not an adequate support base to facilitate a more extensive change. Experimentation with the new techniques took place in all three western provinces in the mid-1920s. The individualized study methods of the Winnetka and Dalton Plans were used and evaluated in several schools. Such activity was important in that, while it did not result in widespread adoption of these ideas, it did heighten interest in and support for more child-centered schooling. The publication in 1925 of J.H. Putman and G.M. Weir's *Survey of the School System* in British Columbia made public one of the first declarations of a government related authority in favor of the ideas associated with progressive education. From 1925 on, we can see evidence of a steady build up of interest in these new ideas, eventually leading, after 1932, to a series of reform measures altering the curriculum of all Canadian provinces. The Depression and, later, the threat of totalitarianism encouraged many Canadians to consider alternative ways of providing for the educational needs of Alberta's children. Sensing this mood, educators grasped the opportunity to present progressive education as "the doctrine that would remedy the ills of a sick society."[2]

Across the nation efforts were made to transform the schools into places of active learning which acknowledged the interests and capabilities of children. The new education placed its emphasis upon democratic decisionmaking and the integration of knowledge, and it took into account the needs of the whole child and his place in a democratic society. Although it is possible, as seen in Sandiford's 1938 article on curriculum change in Canada, to point to policies which give indication of nation-wide adoption of the ideas and practices of progressive education, it is apparent, according to Patterson, that the adoption and change were more superficial than real. Many shared the rhetoric and experimented with the new curriculum and method, but few truly understood and were committed to the philosophy undergirding these changes. As a result, when, as often was the case, the practices failed to offer promised results, reversion to former methods was the outcome.[3]

Generally, then, Canadians were conservative in their approach to progressive reform. In *"The Implementation of Progressive Education in Canada, 1930-1945"* Patterson pointed out that while there was extensive borrowing from the Americans and the British, Canadian educators were selective in their reforms. Even in Alberta, where the impact of progressive education was greater than in any other province, there never was a total or unconditional reliance upon progressive techniques.[4] Alberta educators were adamant in the position that while their's was an activity program in substance, it was above all a "home-grown product carefully developed in the light of the needs, opportunities, and limiting conditions as they [were] to be found in and about Alberta children in Alberta schools."[5]

The most concerted attempts at progressive educational reform were made in Alberta in the 1930s. It was a time of economic depression, agricultural crisis, urban poverty, and political experimentation. The UFA government was driven from power in 1935 and replaced by the new Social Credit government led by Premier William Aberhart. Premier Aberhart took the position of Minister of Education after the election, replacing the Hon. Perren Baker. The decade witnessed other changes of personnel in some of the key positions within the Department of Education. In 1934, Dr. John T. Ross retired as Deputy Minister; he had held the position since 1917. His successor, George W. Gorman served only until 1935. Dr. G. Fred McNally then became Deputy Minister and his previous position as Supervisor of Schools was filled by Dr. H. C. Newland.

Under the new Social Credit government, during its first year in office, 1936, several important reform measures were introduced. While Aberhart, as the new Minister of Education, endorsed these changes, neither he nor his Social Credit colleagues could claim responsibility for initiating the changes. Both in the case of the new curriculum and the large unit of administration, the ideas were formulated under the leadership of the previous UFA administration. It is significant, however, to note that it was the Social Credit government which showed the courage to put these changes into effect.

Among the innovations which stand out as having obvious connection to the child-centered views in vogue during this period, none is more deserving of recognition than the new enterprise approach which was adopted for elementary schools. Also in harmony with the desire to pay greater attention to individual learner needs was the recognition given to early adolescence as a distinct stage in child development. In keeping with this reorientation of thinking, the intermediate school was created so that the unique needs of young adolescence could be addressed more directly by the programs and organization of this new category of student or school. High school programs were reorganized and new courses were added in an attempt to meet the needs of a growing, more diversified student population.

While the new elementary program was intended to alleviate some of the disadvantages to rural children in one-room, multi-class schools, it was obvious to many that the small school districts of Alberta were disfunctional in serving emergent needs of children. The prospect of congregating children through creating large school administrative units and busing them to central locations led many to see the possibilities of providing a richer and improved educational experience for rural children. While this reform measure might have been seen in terms of greater administrative efficiency, it is an example of a policy which could be supported both by the child-centered advocates and the efficiency and management voices.

Even with the creation of divisions, amalgamations of hundreds of small districts, many children in remote areas were limited as to the nature and amount of education they could receive. Steps were taken, therefore, in keeping with the obvious interest in serving Alberta's youth and extending educational opportunity, to make correspondence courses more widely available. In a similar spirit, radio education expanded and offered better learning experiences to rural children.

The effects of this new educational perspective and the attendant changes in practice, structure and curriculum, carried over into the realm of teacher education. Teachers needed to be conversant with child-centered ideas and methods and, because of this, normal school teacher preparation programs underwent considerable modification.

Although generally outside of the sphere of public school education, developments in adult education have relevance to the interests of "progressive" reformers of the period. As well, club women, especially, realized that as women and mothers became better educated and informed, they would be capable of addressing more effectively the needs of children and the role requirements of adult women in a democratic society. For many women, their own education as adults was a way of ensuring a better, richer existence for themselves, but also, and importantly, for children throughout the society.

The Elementary School: Grades I to VI

The course of studies in the elementary and secondary school underwent several early modifications. The original program, devised in 1902 under the direction of Dr. D.J. Goggin, principal of the Regina Normal School, was based upon a system of eight standards. Standards I through V comprised the public school program, and standards VI through VIII, the secondary program. A structural revision was instituted in 1912 by Dr. H.M. Tory, president of the University of Alberta. The standards were abolished in favor of twelve grades, with the achievement required of each grade being equivalent to what an average child would be capable of completing within one year. In 1923 Dr. G. Fred McNally, Supervisor of Schools, revised the course content of the school program. Subject-matter in the elementary curriculum was modernized, and new courses, including one in citizenship, were introduced.[6] Apart from minor adjustments by a general curriculum committee in 1927, these revisions remained in place into the next decade.

Plans to introduce a child-centered, activity philosophy in the elementary school were announced in 1934 by the Department of Education. A ten member general committee headed by Dr. G. Fred McNally, Supervisor of Schools, was appointed. The other members were Inspector L.B. Yule, Inspector W.E. Hay, Inspector H.B. Trout, Inspector H.A. MacGregor, Dr. D.J. Dickie, Dr. H.C. Newland, Dr. M.E. Lazerte, Miss O.M. Fisher, and Principal G.K. Haverstock.[7] When McNally was promoted to Deputy Minister in the following year, Newland became Supervisor of Schools and the general committee's new chairman. While this committee was responsible for the overall revision of the elementary program, the actual "activities" or "enterprises" were drafted in a sub-committee comprised of Dr. Dickie, Miss Fisher, and Inspector Hay.

The activity orientation introduced into Alberta's elementary education program was designed to place the child, and more precisely the whole child, at the center of the educative process. The school's traditional, narrowly focussed preoccupation with the acquisition of skills and knowledge took into account only the intellectual development of the child. To meet the broader objective of educating the whole child, it became necessary to assume the responsibility not simply for his intellectual growth, but also for his emotional, social, and personality development.[8] The specific aims of the elementary program were to facilitate the child's progressive orientation to life by providing opportunities for him to interact with the community; to provide an environment that sustained growth and development through active learning; and to promote the child's social adjustment to the larger classroom group. Additional aims were to develop desirable attitudes, ideals, and appreciations in the emotional life of children; to develop their intellectual capacities; to promote physical and mental health, and to supply activities suitable for children's leisure.[9] Together these aims encompassed all of the important facets of child development. They were intended to produce healthy, intelligent, well-adjusted children who could function purposefully and effectively in a social environment.

The enterprise procedure formed the cornerstone of the new program of studies for the elementary school. An enterprise was defined as a "definite undertaking" which was agreed upon by both teachers and students. Together they would choose an enterprise based upon its potential value and interest, they would plan the enterprise in advance, carry it out according to their plan, bring the enterprise to a definite conclusion, and then reckon the gains. For an enterprise to be considered well-chosen it needed to be centered in the interests of the students and within the range of their abilities. It needed to suggest several kinds of work to be done, to provide different types of social experiences, and to be susceptible to completion in a reasonable length of time. Enterprises involved planning, organizing ideas and materials, co-operation with fellow students, mental and manual work, and the practicing of skills. Through participation in an enterprise students were given the opportunity to make generalizations, acquire insights, attain certain abilities and skills, uncover positive traits of character, and gain new knowledge.[10] The enterprise procedure was considered applicable to those areas of the elementary curriculum termed "integrated sequences," specifically social studies, elementary science, and health, and it could be used in the "appreciational subjects," which were literature, art, and music. Language, reading, and arithmetic continued to be taught by more traditional means.[11]

Although the elementary program employed the enterprise or activity procedure, it was highly adapted to the specific needs and conditions in Alberta schools. Children were encouraged to learn through activity, by "doing." Activities which resided within children's experiences, and which involved play, had meaning and relevance in their immediate lives and, therefore, were judged to be the most educative.[12] However, the Alberta activity procedure did not permit children the absolute freedom to follow their own purposes without regard for the requirements of adult society. Their future roles as citizens dictated that their activities be compatible with the common interests of the community. In other words, the activity procedure utilized in the Alberta elementary program enabled the child to develop his interests "not merely by himself, as if he were in a hothouse or a forsaken garden, but also in the physical and social environment by which his life will be fashioned."[13]

It was within the social studies (a fusion of history, civics, and geography), that children were to develop the qualities that would be essential to their future roles in adult society. Through participation in school community enterprises children learned to co-operate with classmates in experiencing an understanding and appreciation of human relations. The attitudes which the social studies program aimed to cultivate included inquiry, or the desire to investigate, and critical-mindedness, the tendency to evaluate explanations, causes, and consequences. Children were encouraged in attitudes of open-mindedness, tolerance, responsibility, and appreciation for the contributions of others. They were to develop attitudes of creative self-expression, self-cultivation, willingness to co-operate, and sympathy towards foreigners and the underprivileged. In short, it was intended that children "develop an attitude on all the important problems arising from men's living together."[14]

Such a radically new program called upon the abilities, initiative, and resources of teachers as never before. They were expected to be able to manage classrooms of children involved in complex patterns of activity, and they were to be able to adapt procedures to the individual needs of each child.[15] If they were to succeed then some specialized training was in order. The Supervisor of Schools arranged to have the new program critically reviewed by a Joint Conference of Inspectors and Normal School Instructors, held in June 1935. Following their favorable reaction, steps were taken to introduce the new program to classroom teachers. Inspectors identified two or three teachers from each Inspectorate and invited them to take a special course at the summer school where they examined the theory, objectives, and procedures of the new elementary program with a view to experimenting with the program in their own schools during the year 1935-36. Some seventy-five teachers agreed to this arrangement.[16]

These specially selected and trained teachers attempted enterprise work in their schools over the year and reported to the general committee at Easter. Their evaluations of the program, together with reports from Inspectors who supervised the work and reports from staff members of the normal practice schools, were then utilized by the general committee in drafting the new *Programme of Studies for the Elementary School*. A gradual introduction was envisaged whereby only teachers having training in enterprise work were to attempt a full enterprise program in the 1936-37 school year; all others were to attempt two or three enterprises over the same period. In fact, the number of teachers qualified to attempt a full enterprise program by September 1936 was substantial because over nine hundred of them had enrolled in classes designed to illustrate the new technique at the 1936 summer school session.[17]

The elementary program's emphasis upon subject integration and group activities was thought to reflect life outside the school. Here was the opportunity to turn the classroom into an example of co-operative living and by 1939, at a time of renewed global conflict, it was easy to see why such a learning objective was being pursued. The democratic way of life was being threatened. Recognizing that the ability to think and act democratically did not develop automatically in children but had to be taught, it became the aim of the elementary program to provide a classroom experience in which children might actually practice democracy through the enterprise procedure of collectively selecting a problem, planning how to approach it, and working together to see it through to conclusion.[18] It was a procedure designed to prepare children for democratic citizenship.

The Intermediate School: Grades VII to IX

Inherent in the activity based reform of Alberta's educational programs was a recognition of the distinct stages of child development. At the elementary level, very young schoolchildren, the seven to nine year olds, were segregated into division I, while older children, in the ten through twelve age range, were grouped in division II. Enterprise activities were carried out within divisions rather than grades. The intermediate school was designed to acknowledge the next stage of child development, which was early adolescence, ages thirteen through fifteen. Teachers of this age group were to be experts in the psychology of adolescence, able to adapt teaching procedures and methods of discipline to their students' mental, emotional, and physical needs. The intermediate program was, in many ways, a continuation of that begun in the elementary school. The project or enterprise procedure was adopted, as was the broad perspective of education wherein children were trained not merely for knowledge, but for skills, habits, appreciations, and attitudes. They were taught to employ critical-thinking, that is, how to examine either side of a question, how and where to uncover the facts, and how to use that evidence in reaching a conclusion. Loyalty to the ideals of democracy also was fostered.[19]

The intermediate school served a dual function as a "preparatory school" for students proceeding to a high school program and as a "finishing school" for those who would not continue their education beyond grade IX. However, the intermediate school was not to differentiate between these two groups. All students were to take a prescribed core of five subjects together with three optional subjects of their own choosing. The compulsory subjects were English, mathematics, social studies, general science, and health and physical education. The elective subjects were of three types. There were those designed to develop cultural appreciation and leisure time pursuits. Courses in this category were music, dramatics, art and craftwork, as well as participation in clubs, plays, and school bands. The second type of elective course was those of an exploratory nature such as general shop or home economics, commercial and industrial art, or typewriting and bookkeeping. Finally, there were the prevocational courses which were similar to the exploratory courses except that they were more intensive. These latter courses were intended for students who would be leaving school at some point between grades VII and IX.[20]

The completed program for grades VII, VIII, and IX was introduced into the school system in 1937.[21] Henceforward, teachers wishing to instruct the optional subjects were compelled to attain special qualifications through summer school courses. Yet the new program required more than an upgrading of staff qualifications. To be truly effective, special building and equipment features were needed including classroom libraries and a general library, committee rooms, an auditorium with a stage, rooms for art, craftwork, sewing, and home economics, and properly equipped shops, laboratories, and typing rooms. The pitfall was that these provisions were costly; only the school boards of larger urban centers were able to afford them. It was hoped that the newly organized larger divisions would make the same advantages possible in rural areas.[22]

Both the elementary and intermediate school programs represented "a protest against formal methods of instruction and rigidly prescribed lesson material."[23] For this reason teachers were encouraged to make selections from course outlines based upon the particular needs of their classes. Students no longer were subjected to full days of instruction. Instead they were allowed free time each day in library periods, study periods, and periods for remedial work in English. Even homework was minimized because it was "inimical to the genius of the Intermediate School."[24] The program's only formal test was the Grade IX Examination which was administered under the auspices of the High School Entrance Examination Board. The Board's object was to guide students in their choice of a high school program, and to do this, the Board considered the results of the Grade IX Examination, which it supplemented with data supplied in students' record cards. These cards contained information on students' mental ability, interests and aptitudes, general school record, health and personality. Based upon this information the Board assigned a rating of "A", "B", or "C" and this determined eligibility for the different high school programs.[25]

The High School: Grades X to XII

The demand for access to Alberta's secondary educational facilities grew steadily throughout the inter-war period. In 1920, over nine thousand students were enrolled in the high school grades, ten years later that number had increased to over twenty-one thousand, and by 1935 it had risen past twenty-eight thousand students. The Department of Education attempted to accommodate the needs of this burgeoning population through an extensive curriculum revision undertaken in the 1930s. Recognizing that not all students aspired to a career in the professions, a committee of Department, university, and teaching representatives determined to diversify the high school course of studies to embody academic, commercial, technical, and general programs.[26] By placing less emphasis upon matriculation and normal entrance courses, the high school experience was expected to become more pertinent to the majority of students.

The new high school program was introduced into the schools grade by grade beginning with grade X in 1937, grade XI in 1938, and grade XII in 1939. The plan of the new program was as follows. Each school day was divided into eight class periods, one of which had to be designated a study period. The total number of periods available for instruction in a week then, was thirty-five. Students were obliged to take certain compulsory subjects which included English and social studies for grades X through XII, plus health and physical education for grade X only. The remainder of students' courses were to be selected from four categories of electives. Academic electives, which would be the choice of students wishing a normal entrance or matriculation, included algebra, geometry, chemistry, physics, Latin, French, and German. Commercial electives included courses in bookkeeping, typewriting, stenography, and office practice. Technical electives were woodwork, metal work, electricity, printing, arts and crafts, fabrics and dress, and homemaking. General electives included dramatics, music, art, general mathematics, general science, general shop, home economics, commercial law, sociology and psychology, physical education, and vocations and guidance. Teachers were required to have special qualifications in order to teach dramatics, music, general shop, and home economics. There was some variation in the actual electives offered at each grade level. At the grade XII level, for example, the general electives had been narrowed down to only two courses: economics and creative writing.

Apart from the compulsory core, students were free to elect the optional subjects according to their own interests and aptitudes. Each subject carried a certain credit weighting which was determined by the number of periods of instruction required of that subject in a week. For example, the compulsory English courses required five periods of instruction per week so the credit weighting was five, the optional home economics courses consumed cnly four periods per week for a credit weighting of four. Students could earn thirty-five credits per year. If they completed the three year program and earned a minimum of one hundred credits, they were granted a high school diploma (which was the same for all students regardless of the courses taken).[27] The architects of the new program took care to point out that high school credits were to be granted upon the broad basis of mental, social, and personal growth, and not merely for passing examinations.[28]

The newly revised program was conceived in response to the issue of how best to meet the needs of an ever increasing high school population; one having tremendous variation in intellectual capacities, interests, and aptitudes. Unlike the traditional system, where high school students had very little choice but to pursue an "academic" education suited to the requirements for entrance to a post-secondary institution, the revised program recognized that not all students had intentions of continuing to normal schools or universities. For the majority, the high school years marked the end of their formal education. The new program sought to ensure that the education these students were offered had relevance to their lives, and it was for this reason that the number and variety of courses were broadened to encompass not only academic, but technical, commercial, and even general electives. These were courses intended to cater to a larger percentage of the high school population.

However, this increased high school population meant a wider range of ability and this left the new system open to the charge that achievement standards were being lowered, particularly in the academic subjects. In fact, officials in the Department of Education readily conceded that this was the situation; former standards of achievement which had been attained by a select group no longer were possible when students of lesser abilities were demanding their place in the high schools. The intended solution was that students, through proper educational and vocational guidance, be encouraged to elect only those courses for which they had a realistic aptitude: Were this the case, achievement standards in the academic subjects would not be lowered. There was an additional problem in that academic electives were considered by many to confer prestige and status. This was a society competing for jobs in the midst of the Depression, and employers often used graduates' records in academic subjects as criteria in granting choice positions. While a guidance service might point out the courses where a student could succeed, economic pressures and entrenched snobbery might very well dictate a student's choice of academic subjects.[29]

By the early 1940s, the Department of Education began to explore the possibility of introducing more child-centered, activity elements of reform into the high schools. For example, H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools, visualized a refocus to "education for intelligent social living"; an integrated program with instructional materials organized around activities or projects instead of traditional subjects; and individualized teaching based upon the personal needs of students.[30] Others were more guarded in their enthusiasm. In a survey of some thirteen groups of parents, teachers, and administrators, the Department asked whether it should move the high school in the same direction as the elementary and intermediate schools by replacing the traditional subject curriculum with an experience curriculum. No respondents recommended haste in this matter. The consensus view favored a cautiously experimental approach, with one group of the opinion that "all attempts to graft a progressive individualized type of education on a system organized only for cheap 'mass production' methods are pre-ordained to failure."[31] What all respondents did support was the Department's view that educational programs could contribute vitally in sustaining a democratic social order. Training for citizenship in a democracy was ranked with training for vocational life and for leisure activities as the three most favored objectives of a high school program.[32] These elements of progressivism were ones that Albertans could endorse.

The new programs for the elementary, intermediate, and high school levels, when considered together, formed the "6-3-3" plan of organization, meaning six grades at the elementary level and three grades each at the intermediate and high school levels. Divisional points were instituted at strategic places along the line of advancement from grades I to XII. The first divisional point was at the end of grade III, the second at the end of grade VI, and the third at the end of grade IX. These divisional points also were promotion points, so that students would be promoted from Division I (grades I to III) to Division II (grades IV to VI) to Division III (grades VII to IX) to Division IV (grades X to XII). Within the divisions themselves, there were no actual promotions from grade to grade; it was the teacher's responsibility to decide where to place each student. The program of each division was integrated and consolidated so that all students within that division could participate in the same instructional activities.[33] There were only two formal promotion examinations or Departmental examinations in the entire system, a "diagnostic, discriminatory and selective" one at the end of grade IX and a second at the end of grade XII "to provide a general check-up and evidence of attainment on which to base further work."[34]

Rural Education and Large Units of Administration

Rural schooling was a major preoccupation of the Department of Education during the inter-war period. Ideally, the education offered to rural children was to be on par with that available to urban dwellers, but the attainment of this end meant overcoming certain obstacles specific to the rural situation such as the smaller tax base, the large areas over which the rural student population was spread, and the difficulties in attracting qualified teachers who were willing to remain in rural communities even though their living conditions and salaries might be less desirable than what was available in cities. The situation was exacerbated further by serious downturns in Alberta's agricultural economy both in the early 1920s and throughout the 1930s.

Unfavorable financial conditions made it impossible for smaller school districts to keep their schools functioning over a term. Even with the aid of special government grants, the average period of operation for rural schools was only in the neighborhood of one hundred and eighty days in the late 1920s.[35] Another consequence of economic instability was unemployment. Its effect upon education was that young men and women who normally would have entered the workforce, were now unable to secure positions and so remained in school to continue their studies. The problem of providing advanced or secondary training to rural students, therefore, assumed a growing urgency. Secondary education was not easily accessible to rural students. Usually, they were compelled to attend the nearest town or city high school where they incurred the costs of room and board as well as non-resident fees. The elimination of these fees in 1920, aided rural students but displeased town and city ratepayers.

Crowded high schools meant increased expenditures in buildings, equipment, and teaching staff. These costs were borne by the town and city taxpayer. By mid-decade, the constant crowding of secondary schools caused citizens to voice strenuous objections to their continual accommodation of non-resident students.[36]

Throughout this period the Department was actively seeking other solutions to the problem of supplying the rural population with secondary educational opportunities. One answer was to encourage boards of trustees and teachers in one-roomed schools to provide instruction in grades above the eighth. The inducement was a grant of fifty cents per day from the province. More commonly, the need for secondary education was met via the construction of two-roomed schools. Between 1920 and 1929, these were erected at a rate of anywhere from twelve to twenty-nine units per year. Perhaps the most promising solution lay in the establishment of rural high schools. Certainly the farm population had agitated in favor of this measure for several years. The Secondary Consolidated School Act, which was passed in 1921, granted authority to two or more school districts to unite to organize a rural high school. A consolidated district was administered by a board of trustees comprised of one member appointed from the board of trustees of each participating school district. The finances required to operate a rural high school were raised by taxes levied on all taxable property in each district as well as a government grant of four dollars per day. Two consolidated districts immediately were formed during the year, one located at Fleet and the other at Irma.[37] By 1930, only sixteen high school districts had been organized, and by 1934, fully one-half of all rural schools still had no provision for secondary education.[38]

A significant part of the rural education problem in Alberta lay in securing teachers for rural schools. Throughout the 1920s, whether there was a shortage or an over supply of trained teachers, it remained difficult to entice them to pursue their careers in rural areas. Most often, a young, newly trained and, therefore, inexperienced teacher would accept a teaching post at a rural school for one year only.

and after that period she would leave to accept a position in a town or city school. What residents of rural areas wanted was teachers who would remain in, and become a part of, their communities. However, several factors mitigated against such a course. For one thing, the pay was low in rural areas, lower than what could be earned in city schools. Equally important was the living conditions which rural teachers were forced to endure. Usually a teacher had little choice but to board with a neighborhood family, or she had to board with several different families throughout the year. Apart from the stultifying lack of privacy which such situations presented, there was the additional difficulty in which teachers seldom moved beyond the status of "guests" in communities which supposedly desired to have them become integral members.

Different means were employed to encourage teachers to remain at rural teaching posts. These included raising salaries (although they always remained lower than urban teachers' salaries), providing special training at normal schools to better equip student teachers for rural conditions, and the provision of teachers' residences next to rural schools. This latter course became popular at the turn of the decade when the Department of Education instituted a new policy of building homes for teachers. Between 1919 and 1921 some eighty-seven such residences were erected throughout the province. Usually they were built on a five acre plot near the school and stocked with an adequate supply of fuel. Modern teacherages were felt to be suitable for married men with families, or two female teachers if the school itself was a two-roomed variety. They did tend to hold teachers in the same schools from year to year, with the added advantage of permitting the continuous operation of schools that, under other circumstances, would have been able to operate for only a few summer months.[39]

Efforts to improve rural education were launched on a new course in 1934, when the provincial government appointed a special legislative committee to make a comprehensive survey of education in the rural districts of Alberta and report its findings and recommendations to the legislature. The Hon. Perren E. Baker, Minister of Education, chaired the committee comprised of Messrs. Hector Lang, W.E. Payne, J. Mackintosh, A.L. Smeaton, G.B. Walker, A.G. Andrews, C.A. Ronning, I. Goresky, and R.M. McCool.[40] The committee report, presented in April 1935, supported several aspects of the activity program, including the emphasis upon children's physical, mental, social, moral, and personality development; and the atmosphere of freedom, co-operation, and creative self-expression, as being adaptable to rural classrooms.[41] The report contained several other recommendations designed to improve the quality and availability of education in rural communities. Scholarships were to be provided to deserving students, school library facilities were to be improved, at least one Folk School was to be established, and the Dominion Government was to be approached regarding the establishment of a Canadian Library Commission, and the provision of grants for libraries in rural communities as a means of fostering adult education in Alberta. The report also recommended that the Department of Education pay closer attention to its supervision of rural schools, and that it investigate the feasibility of using the radio to supplement the teaching in these schools. The requirements of the teaching profession were to be altered. It was suggested that consideration be given to the question of requiring either grade XII for normal entrance or a two year training course for prospective teachers. Further, those teachers who had not actually taught for five years were to be required to take a refresher course before being allowed to accept a teaching post. Since a study of taxation was underway at the time, the authors of the report used the opportunity to recommend that special attention be directed toward the issue of financing rural education. If the costs of education were more fairly distributed there would be a greater possibility of equalizing educational opportunities for all of Alberta's citizens.

Finally, there were several recommendations in the report which highlighted the positive effects to be wrought by a move towards larger units of administration. For example, in order to serve the needs of families who were scattered over wide areas on the fringes of settlement, the report suggested that residential schools be established either by the province directly, or by changing the School Act to permit the organization of larger sized units of administration which would have greater resources to build schools. Extension of secondary education in rural areas, either by the province or by combining districts into units large and strong enough to meet the problem, also was encouraged. The legislative committee concluded by recommending that the Department of Education study the question of the larger unit of administration as a means to increasing efficiency in rural education.[42]

Once the report was presented to the Assembly, and following its own investigations of the matter, the Department of Education issued a pamphlet entitled *"What Is and What Might Be in Rural Education in Alberta"* which set forth the advantages to be expected from a reorganization of rural school administration. Members of the Legislative Assembly then used the pamphlets in discussions with their constituents.[43] In this way the concept of enlarged units had received some degree of general discussion before the government passed legislation in 1936 making the establishment of larger units possible. The new units were called "divisions" and each was achieved by combining anywhere from fifty-five to one hundred small school districts into one unit of administration.[44] In the fall of 1936, seven hundred and forty-four rural school districts were combined to form eleven school divisions. These were No. 1, Berry Creek; No. 2, St. Mary's River; No. 3, Foremost; No. 4, Cypress; No. 5, Tilley East; No. 6, Taber; No. 7, Lethbridge; No. 8, Acadia; No. 9, Sullivan Lake; No. 10, Peace River; and No. 11, Lac Ste. Anne. Each of the divisions was comprised of five subdivisions, and each subdivision elected a member of the trustee board. Each five-member board, together with a Superintendent and a secretary-treasurer, saw to the business of operating its school division.[45]

The divisional school boards performed several administrative functions. In the realm of finance, the School Act stipulated that schools were to be financed through the existing municipal organization. Therefore, when a board took office, one of its first tasks was to survey the needs of the division and compile a budget. Requisitions were then submitted to each of the municipal authorities operating within the division. After only one year of operation under the new organization, it was discovered that the educational expenditure in every division was less than it had been during the last year under the district system.

The largest item of expense was teachers' salaries, and here the Act required that each board establish a salary schedule indicating precisely what recognition a teacher could expect for satisfactory service, additional training, or higher qualifications. Since the ability to pay teachers' salaries varied greatly between divisions, there was wide variation in the schedules adopted. Most of the districts owed sums to teachers in the way of arrears of salary, and the divisional boards had to assume these amounts. Some of the boards paid the arrears immediately, others paid the debts to their teachers gradually, over periods of from three to five years.

Each division had a director of education known as the Superintendent, and this position continued to be appointed and paid by the province. The position of secretary-treasurer was appointed and paid by the divisional board. In addition, the trustees themselves were allowed a per diem allowance of five dollars plus travelling expenses when in attendance at board meetings.[46]

Another function performed by the boards was the procurement of school supplies for the entire division. This system was initiated with each teacher submitting a requisition form to the divisional office, indicating the supplies required for the year. All items were then consolidated into a single list and tenders invited from supply houses. By making bulk purchases, the boards were able to realize savings of from twenty-five to forty per cent. Furthermore, the supplies were secured promptly and were present when needed, unlike previous experiences under the district system where textbooks and supplies often were unavailable to teachers. The divisions also transferred furniture between schools so that it was utilized more efficiently.

The Depression years were not a propitious time for initiating building programs although certain conditions, such as shifts in population or losses by fire, made such expenditures unavoidable. In many divisions there were no funds even to repair buildings already in existence. The divisional boards did what they could in the way of pinpointing where buildings or repairs were needed, and meeting the requirements of the most pressing cases.

Where divisional boards displayed more success was in the transference of teachers to different schools within divisions. The adoption of salary schedules, and the expectation of prompt payment of salaries, made teachers more willing to accept transfers to schools where their particular specializations would be best utilized.

A significant achievement of divisions was the provision of increased opportunity for high school study. Boards sought to open high school rooms in different sections of a division, wherever there were enough children to warrant the expenditure. In certain sparsely populated areas, the boards provided a high school education via correspondence courses.[47]

Larger administrative units functioned more efficiently and economically than the individual school districts. Once the provincial government became committed to the idea, the reorganization of districts into divisions commenced rapidly. Eleven school divisions were formed in the year that legislation allowing such activity was passed. By 1938, approximately ninety per cent of all rural schools had been organized into forty-four divisions, leaving only three hundred and fifty or so rural schools operating individually.[48] In the following year the total number of divisions had risen to forty-six, and in 1940, it had reached forty-eight.[49] The reorganization to school divisions improved the quality of the rural educational experience in terms of better maintained buildings, a cheaper and more dependable supply of textbooks and materials, a relatively contented teaching force that could seek position transfers within divisions and realistically expect payment of salaries, and increased secondary school opportunities with a wider variation in the range of subjects available in these schools.

Although few supporters, if any, of the new large unit of school administration defended its adoption on grounds harmonious with the key concepts and philosophy of the increasingly popular "progressive education," it is important to recognize that this change in structure did derive support because it extended educational opportunity to more of Alberta's children and served to equalize, to a greater degree, rural and urban opportunity. For many who supported this development, its merit resided not as much in its efficiency and cost saving as in its facilitation of better and more varied learning experiences for rural children.

Alternate Forms of Delivery: Correspondence Courses & Radio Education

Other steps were taken during the inter-war period to enrich learning opportunities for young children. In 1923, the Department of Education embarked upon an innovative new project designed to broaden the availability of education to residents of rural Alberta. This project, a distance delivery system based upon correspondence courses, was a response to the needs of large numbers of Albertans living in remote areas of the province. The isolation of these families was in some cases quite pronounced; often the distance between neighbors was too great to enable them to form a school district. In such instances the educational alternatives for families with children were limited. They might make their own attempts at instruction or provide a tutor, or they could abandon their homesteads and resettle nearer a school, which was the usual path selected.

Correspondence courses provided a welcome alternative. Having first conducted a survey in the fall of 1923 to ascertain the numbers of children residing in isolated regions, the Department proceeded to prepare lessons and instructions, and draft application forms. Within two months, one hundred children were enrolled in the new program. The idea was that a mother, if given sufficient direction, could instruct her younger children in the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Families were supplied with Readers and careful instructions as to how to employ them in educating the children. Completed exercises were forwarded to the Department where they were corrected and returned, along with suggestions to the parents.[50] In the following year, the scope of the operation was broadened to include not only children living on lands outside school districts, but also those who lived in districts where the school was not in operation, or in operation for a certain segment of the year. By this time three hundred and fifty students, representing all the public school grades from I to VIII, were enrolled in the program, and the numbers continued to mount annually.[51]

Gradually, as the Branch became better established, other groups who might benefit from its services were identified. By the 1930s, these included children having physical disabilities which prevented their attendance at schools, children in hospitals, and children who lacked the appropriate winter clothing to enable them to walk to school. In the latter cases, the teacher would recommend to the Attendance Officer that these children be exempted from classes over the winter. Another smaller group benefiting from correspondence courses was adult students, particularly new Canadians seeking to improve their knowledge of the English language.[52] Originally, courses were offered for grades I through VIII only. In 1933, it was decided to extend the program to include high school instruction. The response was immediate with approximately three hundred and seventy students carrying more than one thousand units by correspondence.[53]

Many of the costs associated with correspondence courses were absorbed by the Department of Education. For example, lessons in grades I though VIII were supplied free of charge, Readers for the first six grades were free, and the Department paid the cost of postage on all outgoing mail. However, apart from the Readers, students were required to supply their own textbooks, and for many this presented a definite hardship. Even the small expenditure of mailing completed lessons to the Department for marking was beyond the means of several families. Were it not for these expenses, it was estimated that the number of students enrolled in correspondence courses would have been considerably higher.[54] Yet enrollment figures continued to climb in part due to the fact that toward the end of the decade, other uses for correspondence courses were identified. Small numbers of children from the Northwest Territories enrolled in the correspondence program.[55] A requirement was introduced compelling students who were preparing the work of the first two high school years privately, to take correspondence instruction as a means of providing some measure of their fitness to advance to the next grade.[56] Divisional Boards made significant use of correspondence courses in order to provide rural students with a high school education, particularly in cases where Boards were unable to furnish dormitories or class instruction within reach of students. These new applications of correspondence courses affected enrollment figures tremendously. In 1940, the numbers of students relying upon correspondence instruction were as follows: five hundred and seventy-one in the elementary section, six hundred and twenty-two in the intermediate section, and two thousand seven hundred and forty-six in the high school section.[57]

Radio education became another alternate means of delivering instruction to students in rural communities. The idea took shape at a conference in 1937 comprised of educationalists interested in broadcasting.[58] The original purpose of the conference was to discuss the Teachers' Forum Broadcasts, a series which had been initiated in January and which was directed to teachers in the field. Contributing organizations such as the Alberta Teachers' Association, the School of Education of the University of Alberta, the Educational Progress Club of Calgary, the Education Society of Edmonton, the three Normal Schools, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and the Department of Education each were allowed half hour broadcasts over Station CKUA, University of Alberta, in which they presented educational issues and answered questions. The apparent success of the program led the conference delegates to consider whether or not radio broadcasting might have a valid application for schools. It was recommended that the Minister of Education appoint a Departmental Radio Committee to explore the matter.[59]

Accordingly, a committee comprised of representatives of educational organizations including the Department of Education, the University of Alberta, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, and others, met at the Government Buildings in Edmonton in May 1937.[60] There the committee passed several resolutions pertaining to the implementation of radio broadcasts for rural schools. It was thought prudent to begin cautiously with an experimental regional program, and the Lethbridge area was selected for this purpose. There were then the matters of ascertaining which schools already had radios in them, what types of radios would be most suitable for school use, and who would service them. A sub-committee was appointed to these tasks. The committee recommended that the Department of Education assume full control of the use of school time for the reception of radio broadcasts. The programs to be aired during the 1937-38 school year were envisioned to be of a kind that would aid underprivileged schools, those struggling with the most limited resources. The broadcasting period was restricted to fifteen minutes and schools were not to receive more than two programs per day. Programs were to be prepared for the elementary and intermediate school levels in the subjects of music and music appreciation, social studies, science, and literature.[61]

In 1938, Mr. G. Gaetz, Manager of Station CJOC in Lethbridge, was able to report to the committee on the year of experimentation with the School of the Air broadcasts. Based upon this station's experiences with the project, the committee decided to push forward with a series of broadcasts for schools over the Alberta

Educational Network. The broadcasts were to emanate from Station CKUA Edmonton, CFCN Calgary, and CJOC Lethbridge. A survey conducted by the committee chairman revealed that approximately one hundred and fifty schools had the use of a radio for the school broadcasts.[62] By 1939, when the committee had prepared an annotated schedule for the school broadcasts, three hundred schools requested copies. Although the broadcasts were intended for students in rural schools, teacher reports revealed that students in town and city schools also were listening in on a regular basis.[63] By 1940, four hundred and fifty schools were listening to the broadcasts.

The concept of radio education proved so successful in Alberta that negotiations were begun with the Departments of Education in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and British Columbia to explore whether it might be possible to initiate a co-operative series of school broadcasts for the western provinces. A conference of the four provinces endorsed the objectives of school broadcasts as laid out in the Alberta plan. Namely that children listening to broadcasts should learn to appreciate and evaluate them; that the radio was not intended to displace the classroom teacher, only to guide, stimulate, intensify, and supplement classroom effort; and that the radio should encourage interest in community and world affairs and foster civic and social attitudes consistent with democratic ideals. It was agreed that the four provinces would attempt the joint preparation of some broadcasts with the assistance of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and that these half hour broadcasts would be given alternately from Vancouver and Winnipeg from scripts prepared by a committee representing the four provinces.[64] Thus, by 1940, radio broadcasts had become an accepted medium by which to educate children in the western provinces.

Preparation of Teachers

The period following 1936 was filled with important changes in teacher education. If the new philosophy of activity and child-centeredness was to permeate the system, teachers needed to understand the new curriculum and have the background essential to appropriate use of it. In an address to the Alberta Teachers' Association in 1936, Dr. Donalda Dickie, a normal school instructor and one of the chief architects of the new programs, outlined her perceptions of what the Department of Education expected from its teaching force:

> I believe the Department to be determined to secure teachers who can give [a] higher type of education; teachers who are willing to inform themselves widely, to read and to think; teachers who are capable of taking a range of subject matter which has been agreed upon, and themselves choosing from it what will be most interesting and useful to their own pupils; teachers who will resent, instead of demand, that the selections for reading and literature be handed out to them by the Department, and 'city' outlines be prepared of the day to day work in the classroom which they may follow slavishly, making automatons of themselves as well as of the children in their charge.[65]

The changes that were instituted amounted to higher admission standards, a more rigorous program of preparation, and more stringent certification requirements.

During the Depression, teachers were expected to work for salaries that were lower than those of previous years. In 1933, the average annual salary for teachers in rural schools was $841.57, in town schools it was $1,414.25, and for all schools combined the average salary was $1,076.51, which was the lowest average since 1916. The statutory minimum salary for teachers had been set at $840 per year, but the popular feeling at the time was that this amount should be withdrawn or considerably lowered. The question was debated in the legislature and, rather than altering the statute, it was agreed to leave the matter to the Minister of Education. If he felt that insistence upon the minimum would cause a definite hardship in a district, he could approve the payment of a lower salary.[66] Numerous districts applied for this concession with the result that rural salaries dropped from an average of $841.57 in 1933, to $738.29 in 1934, to $722.92 in 1935.[67] It was not until 1940 that the average salaries of teachers met pre-Depression levels.[68]

Teacher training in Alberta was carried out at three normal schools in Edmonton, Camrose, and Calgary, and at the School of Education situated at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. For some years consideration had been given to raising admission standards to normal school to the minimum requirement of graduation from grade XII. The changes to the programs of the elementary and intermediate grades finally motivated officials to institute this higher admission requirement. It was felt that the new curricula, the new teaching techniques, the activity procedures, and the modernized teaching objectives could best be handled by a "new type of teacher," one who possessed not merely the appropriate skills, (these could be learned through training), but also "good mental ability, a sound personality, and plenty of initiative and resourceful independence."[69] Beginning in September 1937, candidates to normal schools needed to present a grade XII certificate, a personality report signed by the principal of their secondary school, and a character reference from a responsible person in the community. Further, candidates were subjected to a medical examination to determine physical fitness and a qualifying examination.[70]

An admission quota was set at four hundred and fifty candidates for the year 1937-38, and at four hundred for each year thereafter. However, the net enrollment for 1937-38 actually was far below the quota with only three hundred and fifty-two candidates admitted. Several factors accounted for this shortfall. Undoubtedly the higher requirements for admission had an affect, but perhaps equally as significant were the depressed economic conditions of many Alberta families and the prospect of poor salaries and unfavorable conditions of work in rural areas after graduation. Manitoba and Saskatchewan experienced a similar decline in normal school enrollments at this time.[71] The severity of the situation became apparent in 1938 when, for the first time in years, there was a distinct shortage of teachers.[72]

The program of study at Alberta's normal schools consisted of a thirty-six week term which commenced in mid-September and ended the following June. The curriculum included courses in the following subjects: principles and science of education, psychology (including educational psychology and psychology of childhood and of adolescence), English (including speech training), social studies, mathematics, science, health (including mental hygiene), school and class management, music, art, and physical education. In addition to this course work, student teachers were required to complete units in classroom practice and rural practice teaching. Classroom practice was carried out in the practice schools which were attached to each of the normal schools, and in designated schools in Edmonton and Calgary. Here the student teacher observed classroom organization and participated in classroom instruction under the guidance of a supervising teacher. For the unit in rural practice teaching, a student teacher spent one to two weeks in a rural school observing, assisting, and finally managing a classroom on his or her own. Every normal school student was required to participate in rural practice teaching regardless of where he or she planned to work upon completion of the program.[73]

Those students who attained the full twenty-four credits in the course work and passed the practice teaching segments were eligible for the Elementary and Intermediate Certificate. Students who attained between eighteen and twenty-three credits were required to attend one or more sessions of the summer school for teachers. Only after they had made-up the deficiency in their credits were they granted a teacher's certificate. Students who failed the practice teaching or had fewer than eighteen credits in the courses were required to re-enter the normal school program, take all the final examinations, and pass the practice teaching before they could obtain a certificate.[74]

In 1936 the Alberta legislature granted professional status to teachers. Thereafter, a condition of employment for every teacher wishing to practice in the province was that he or she be a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association. It was hoped that this new status would promote higher educational, ethical, and professional ideals among teachers. The Department of Education immediately moved to foster these ideals by putting forward new, more stringent standards of certification. The new regulations governing teacher certification were approved by the Minister in 1936, and were made effective over the next two years. Beginning in September 1938, teaching certificates no longer were classified as First or Second Class, but instead were designated to fit either an elementary, intermediate, or high school level. After June 1937, teachers' interim certificates were issued only to students who had successfully completed the normal school requirements. Students having deficiencies in their programs were required to attend summer school or return to normal school. Interim certificates were valid for three years, during which time teachers strove for permanent certificates. These were awarded after two years' experience in teaching, favorable inspection reports, attendance at a summer school session after one year of training, and successful completion of a reading course. As of September 1937, teachers holding a Second Class Certificate were not permitted to instruct grades above the ninth, and in September 1938, they could not instruct grades above the eighth. Permanent certificates lapsed for holders who had not taught for five years. Finally, the Department of Education required that persons appointed to inspectorial or normal school staffs be holders of a Bachelor of Education degree.[75]

After January 1937, the responsibility for training high school teachers passed from the normal schools to the School of Education at the University of Alberta. Henceforth, High School Teacher's Certificates were issued by the Minister only to holders of a School of Education Diploma. Teachers having these qualifications were eligible to teach grades XI and XII. Normal school graduates were issued the new

Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate which had a teaching range of from grade I to grade X.[76] In 1940, the legislature elevated the School of Education to the status of a college. Originally a bachelor's degree was required for admission to the College of Education, but it soon was realized that this would produce an insufficient number of high school teachers to supply the secondary schools of the province. The College then began accepting enrollments from students having one year of training in the Faculty of Arts and Science.[77]

Since its inception in 1913, the summer school for teachers continued to be a popular avenue by which teachers learned their craft, kept abreast of current educational trends and methods, and upgraded their certification levels. Summer school enrollments grew annually; in 1930 six hundred and seventy-two teachers attended the five week period spanning July and August, in 1931 seven hundred and thirty attended, three years later the total enrollment was eight hundred and thirteen.[78] New features were added to the summer school program such as the practice school, instituted at Garneau Public School, to provide an opportunity for observation and practice teaching. New courses also were regularly introduced. In 1934, it was History of Modern Education, and Rural Education and its Problems.[79] The next year courses were offered to teachers of sub-normal children in mental testing, psychology, and manual arts.[80]

By the latter half of the decade the revision of school programs and new certification requirements preoccupied summer school participants. At the 1935 session, a course was offered in the new program for the elementary grades, for the benefit of seventy-five teachers who had been specially selected by the School Inspectors. These teachers were to utilize the elementary program in their classrooms and report their experiences to the Department. For the next three years American instructors with expertise in enterprise education were invited to teach at the summer school. In 1936 alone, more than eleven hundred teachers took advantage of the course in enterprise education.[81] The revised programs for the intermediate and high school grades required that the new optional subjects be taught by teachers having specific qualifications, and these they attained at summer school.

Immediately upon introduction of the revised school programs summer school attendance figures shot upward as teachers attempted to understand what was now required of them in their classrooms. Total enrollment figures at the Edmonton and Calgary sessions rose from eight hundred and sixty-one in 1935, to one thousand nine hundred and twenty-five in 1936, two thousand seven hundred and fifty-three in 1937, two thousand and twenty-seven in 1938, and one thousand nine hundred and thirty in 1939.[82] A decision was made in 1940 to alter the traditional lecture format for summer school courses in order to bring instructional methods in line with the problem-solving and group oriented learning of the school curriculum. Future summer school courses were to take a progressive turn in that they would be organized on a workshop basis and directed by expert consultants.[83]

Adult Education

In his study entitled *"The Influence of Progressive Thought on the Theory and Practice of Adult Education,"* John R. Minnis asserted that "progressivism has had a greater impact upon adult educational theory and practice in the United States than any other single school of thought."[84] Adult education in that country surfaced during the time when progressive education was a predominant influence, and many of the forms which adult education assumed, such as extension education, adult vocational education, citizenship education, and education of the foreign born, were a "direct consequence of progressivism."[85]

According to Minnis, several basic principles of progressive thought found expression in the adult education movement. In reaction to the traditional emphasis upon intellectual development via the study of academic subjects, the progressives broadened the concept of education to encompass training in values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills. They introduced the pragmatic and the utilitarian into curricula, they made the experiences of the individual central to learning, and they advocated education as a lifelong process. The influence of these concepts of progressive education in adult education can be seen in the emphasis upon continuous lifelong learning and the focus of learning experience on the interests of the individual. The pragmatic, utilitarian, and vocational orientation of adult education also tend to evince this influence. Another principle of progressive education which found expression in adult education was the emphasis on the learner; his needs are a focal point of adult programs. Adult educators also embraced the progressive emphasis on the scientific, problem-solving method. They adopted the new teacher-learner relationship, wherein the teacher fulfilled the role of facilitator, guide, and mentor rather than task-master. Finally, to a degree, even the reconstructionist wing of the progressive movement, which promoted education as an agent of social change, provided supporting ideas as some adult educators espoused the connection between education, social action, and democracy.[86]

Adult education, then, was one of the many areas which internalized the ideas of the progressives. However, the evidence in this study would seem to suggest that during the inter-war period, the adult education movement in Alberta, at least in its formal manifestations, was in only the preliminary stages of mobilization. For example, adult technical education, one form of adult schooling, was available to Albertans in the 1920s from two major institutions, the Provincial Institute of Technology located in Edmonton, and the Technical School, also in Edmonton. For youth, there was a Pre-Vocational School in Calgary with courses in grades VII, VIII, and IX. Additionally, the province operated night schools in cities and mining centers with instruction in mining and steam engineering. Correspondence courses also were available in these subjects.[87]

Technical education enjoyed a steady increase in popularity throughout the 1920s. The Provincial Institute of Technology had an enrollment in 1926 of one thousand one hundred and sixty-six students, four hundred and fifty-two of whom were taking day classes, five hundred and two in night classes, and two hundred and twelve in correspondence courses. A summer school also operated at the Institute with an enrollment of fifty students, the majority of whom were teachers seeking a practical training in science.[88] By 1929, the total enrollment at the Institute in day, night, and correspondence classes had passed over the two thousand mark and space considerations caused applicants to be turned away from the electricity, motor mechanics, and tractor departments. A two year course of study was outlined for technical schools by the Department of Education in 1929, and a third year course was provided in 1930.[89] Even though the demand for technical and vocational education increased steadily throughout the province, the financial strains of the Depression years prevented any large-scale extension of this type of education into the smaller towns and villages. H.C. Newland was less circumspect in his pronouncements. He noted that when the Depression came, "the bottom fell out of vocational training, almost entirely."[90]

Although the period prior to World War II appears to have seen only limited development in formal adult education, the movement did experience growth at other levels. The members of women's organizations in Edmonton, and throughout both urban and rural Alberta, undertook an extensive involvement. However, adult education for women in organizations was informal and took place internally, within the organizations themselves. It assumed the form of committee work, study groups, and lectures to which the public often was invited to attend. The Edmonton club women's interests and participation in adult education are examined in Chapter VI.[91]

The extensive changes to the educational system in the inter-war years, among them being the revised programs for the elementary, intermediate, and high school grades, the reorganization of rural school administration, the use of new distance delivery systems, and the emergence of increased formal and informal adult educational provisions and involvments, all reflected the growing influence of the shifting educational outlook of the period. Rooted in child-centered philosophy, educational progressivism represented the school's attempt to accommodate current-day attitudes toward children. Neil Sutherland in *Children in English-Canadian Society* has traced the Canadian formulation of a progressive view of children and child-rearing. According to Sutherland, it was the urban middle classes who led Canadians in the restructuring of their attitudes toward children. Their interests extended to child-rearing methods, to child health and child welfare, and to education.[92] It is reasonable to surmise that Edmonton women's organizations, as a multi-dimensional segment of the urban middle class, maintained these interests. A consideration of the discussions and programs of Edmonton club women in the 1920s and 1930s is intended to reveal the degree to which these women shared child-centered interests and saw the schools as centers of reform. Through a study of their mutual agendas and programs of action, insight into their role in the larger reform movement will be provided.

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[1] For example, James L. Hughes, Inspector of Public Schools for the City of Toronto, led the movement to provide kindergartens and manual training in Ontario schools.

[2] R.S. Patterson, "The Canadian Response to Progressive Education," in Essays on Canadian Education, eds. Nick Kach, Kas Mazurek, Robert S. Patterson, and Ivan DeFaveri (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1986), pp. 62-63, 65-67.

[3] Ibid., pp. 70-71.

[4] R.S. Patterson, "The Implementation of Progressive Education in Canada, 1930-1945," in Essays on Canadian Education, p. 87.

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[5] Alberta Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the Elementary School: Grades I to VI 1940 (Alberta Department of Education Archives), pp. 22-23.

[6] Alberta Department of Education Annual Report; hereafter designated "AR." AR 1920, n.p.; AR 1923, pp. 29-30; AR 1937, p. 15; AR 1939, p. 7.

[7] AR 1934, p. 17.

[8] Programme of Studies for the Elementary School 1940, pp. 7-8.

[9] Ibid., pp. 3-7.

[10] AR 1937, p. 16.

[11] Programme of Studies for the Elementary School 1940, pp. 27-29.

[12] Alberta Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the Elementary School: Grades I to VI 1936 (Alberta Department of Education Archives), pp. 3-4.

[13] H.C. Newland, "Alberta's New Programme for the Elementary School" (Project Yesteryear).

[14] Programme of Studies for the Elementary School 1936, p. 110.

[15] Newland, "The Enterprise Programme in Alberta Elementary Schools."

[16] AR 1935, pp. 18-19.

[17] AR 1936, pp. 8, 15-16.

[18] AR 1940, pp. 14-15.

[19] Programme of Studies for the Intermediate School 1936, p. 6; AR 1937, pp. 17-18.

[20] Alberta Department of Education, "Changes in the Programme of Studies to Become Effective on September 1, 1936" (Alberta Department of Education Archives); AR 1936, p. 15.

[21] Members of the General Committee on the Intermediate School Program were Dr. M.E. Lazerte, Director of the School of Education; Mr. E.L. Fuller, Chief Inspector of Schools; Dr. W.G. Carpenter, Director of Technical Education; Mr. H.E. Balfour, Senior Inspector of High Schools; Miss Olive Fisher, Calgary Normal School; Mr. G.K. Haverstock, Principal, Camrose Normal School; Mr. H.B. Trout, Camrose Normal School; Mr. W.E. Hay, Inspector of Schools, Stettler; Dr. D.J. Dickie, Edmonton Normal School; Mr. G.K. Sheane, Calgary Normal School; Mr. Stanley Deane, representative of the Alberta Teachers' Association; Mr. H.C. Clark, representative of the Alberta Teachers' Association; and Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools. (Source: AR 1936, p. 14)

[22] AR 1937, pp. 17-19.

[23] AR 1937, p. 18.

[24] AR 1937, p. 18.

[25] Alberta Department of Education, Programme of Studies for Grade IX and Departmental Regulations Relating to the Grade IX Examination for the Year 1936-1937 1936 (Alberta Department of Education Archives), pp. 6-7; 1937, p. 19.

[26] The following Committee was appointed by the Minister to consider the replies to the questionnaires on secondary education: Dr. R.C. Wallace, President, University of Alberta; Dr. J.T. Ross, former Deputy Minister of Education; Dr. W.G. Carpenter, Director of Technical Education; Dr. M.E. Lazerte, Director of the School of Education; Dr. John Macdonald, Department of Philosophy, University of Alberta; Mrs. A.H. Rogers, representing the Trustees' Association; G.W. Gorman, the present Deputy Minister of Education; E.J. Thorlakson, representing the Teachers' Alliance; E.L. Fuller and Dr. H.C. Newland, High School Inspectors; and G. Fred McNally, Supervisor of Schools. (Source: AR 1934, p. 18)

[27] AR 1937, pp. 19-20; AR 1938, pp. 15-17.

[28] Alberta Department of Education, Programme of Studies for the High School: Regulations of the Department of Education for the Year Ending June 30th, 1942 1941 (Alberta Department of Education Archives), p. 5.

[29] AR 1940, p. 17.

[30] H.C. Newland, "Education for Intelligent Living" (Project Yesteryear).

[31] Alberta Department of Education, Revision of the High School Programme: Second Bulletin December 1942 (Alberta Department of Education Archives), p. 17.

[32] Ibid., pp. 7, 21.

[33] AR 1937, pp. 14-15.

[34] AR 1939, p. 8.

[35] AR 1928, p. 9.

[36] AR 1920, n.p. and p. 9; AR 1922, pp. 11-12; AR 1926, pp. 10-11.

[37] AR 1921, pp. 12-13.

[38] AR 1930, p. 9; AR 1934, p. 14.

[39] AR 1920, n.p. and p. 10.

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[40] AR 1934, pp. 12-13.

[41] Report of the Legislative Committee Appointed to Make a Comprehensive Survey and Study of Education in the Rural Districts of Alberta and Report its Findings and Suggestions at the Next Session of the Legislature. Submitted to the Legislative Assembly April 12, 1935. Sessional Paper 136, 1935 (Project Yesteryear).

[42] AR 1935, p. 14.

[43] AR 1935, pp. 14-15.

[44] AR 1936, p. 7.

[45] AR 1937, p. 7.

[46] AR 1937, pp. 7-8.

[47] AR 1937, pp. 8-10.

[48] AR 1938, p. 7.

[49] AR 1939, p. 11; AR 1940, p. 9.

[50] AR 1923, pp. 13, 31.

[51] AR 1924, p. 14.

[52] AR 1934, p. 20; AR 1936, p. 22.

[53] AR 1933, p. 11.

[54] AR 1935, p. 22; AR 1938, pp. 36-37.

[55] AR 1938, p. 36.

[56] AR 1939, pp. 8-9.

[57] AR 1940, p. 10.

[58] In its 1935 report, the Legislative Committee on Rural Education recommended that the Department of Education examine the feasibility of using the radio to supplement teaching in rural schools.

[59] AR 1937, p. 25.

[60] The Departmental Committee on Radio Education was appointed in 1937 by the Minister of Education. Its purpose was to supervise educational broadcasting in

Alberta. Committee members were Miss Sheila Marryat, Station CKUA, University of Alberta; Dr. M.E. Lazerte, School of Education, University of Alberta; Mr. A.E. Ottewell, Registrar of the University of Alberta and Vice-President of the Alberta Trustees' Association; Dr. G.S. Lord, Principal of the Edmonton Normal School; Dr. J.R. Tuck, President of the Education Society, Edmonton; Mr. R.E. Stewart, representative of the Educational Progress Club, Calgary and of the Men's Educational Club, Calgary; Mr. C.R. Bowker, representative of the Alberta Teachers' Association; Mr. H.T. Robertson, representative of the Alberta Teachers' Association; Mr. Owen Williams, Inspector of Schools, Lethbridge; Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools and Committee chairman. (Source: AR 1937, p. 26)

[61] AR 1937, p. 26.

[62] AR 1938, pp. 35-36.

[63] AR 1939, p. 42.

[64] AR 1940, pp. 42-43.

[65] Dr. Donalda J. Dickie, "A Comment on the New Course of Study for Elementary Schools," The A.T.A. Magazine November 1936 (Project Yesteryear).

[66] AR 1933, p. 10.

[67] AR 1934, p. 12; AR 1935, p. 15.

[68] Figures comparing the average annual salaries of teachers in 1929-30 and 1939-40 can be found in the 1940 Annual Report. Numbers are given for divisions, rural schools outside divisions, town and city schools, village schools, separate schools, consolidated schools, rural high schools, urban schools, and all schools combined.

[69] AR 1935, p. 20.

[70] The qualifying examination was administered during the first week of the Normal School term. It consisted of the following: (a) a test of general ability; (b) tests of proficiency in oral and written English, spelling, writing, and various other subjects of the elementary or intermediate school program; (c) a test of intelligence; and (d) tests in oral reading and language, silent reading, good usage, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, history, geography, science and health, and arithmetic. (Source: AR 1936, p. 17)

[71] AR 1937, p. 23.

[72] AR 1938, p. 8.

[73] AR 1938, p. 20.

[74] AR 1938, p. 21.

[75] AR 1936, pp. 16-17.

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[76] AR 1938, p. 32.

[77] AR 1940, p. 39.

[78] AR 1930, pp. 10, 18; AR 1931, p. 11; AR 1934, p. 19.

[79] AR 1934, p. 19.

[80] AR 1935, p. 21.

[81] AR 1936, p. 18.

[82] AR 1936, p. 18; AR 1937, p. 22; AR 1938, p. 33; AR 1939, p. 37.

[83] AR 1940, pp. 39-40.

[84] John R. Minnis, "The Influence of Progressive Thought on the Theory and Practice of Adult Education," in Progressive Education-Past, Present and Future Proceedings of the Alberta Universities Educational Foundations Conference, University of Alberta, April 26-28, 1984 (Athabasca, Alberta: Athabasca University, 1984) p. 117.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., pp. 124-129.

[87] AR 1920, p. 12.

[88] AR 1926, p. 11.

[89] AR 1929, p. 10.

[90] Newland, "Education for Intelligent Living."

[91] According to Gaskell and McLaren, the term "adult education" has defied precise definition even to the present-day. There is the difficulty of determining the minimum age at which a person might be said to be participating in adult education. Studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s have variously set the limit at seventeen, eighteen, twenty-one and out of school for two years, and twenty-five. There is the additional problem of identifying what sorts of activities constitute adult education. Some contemporary educators insist that adult education is non-vocational, others have perceived it in broader terms as any course taken by adults, no matter what the content. Jane S. Gaskell and Arlene Tigar McLaren, eds., Women and Education: A Canadian Perspective (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1987), pp. 305-306. John Minnis also has pointed to the classification and definition problems associated with adult education. He resolved that the field was "amorphous" in nature, and that it possessed "a vocabulary possibly unparalleled in its confusion." Minnis, "The Influence of Progressive Thought on the Theory and Practice of Adult Education," p. 129. This apparent lack of consensus over the meaning of adult education has persisted since the inter-war years and it may account, at least in part, for why the participation of women

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in organizations was not widely acknowledged in their own day or by historians of the period.

[92] Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, p. 27.

CHAPTER III

EDMONTON CLUB WOMEN'S VIEWS ON THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG ALBERTANS

A cursory glance at the meeting agendas of the six Edmonton women's organizations reveals that all clubs regarded education as an important topic of study and discussion during the twenty year period between 1919 and 1939. Some of these groups even pursued action-oriented objectives in an effort to ensure that some of their ideas became operational. As well, they provided representation or input, when requested, to curriculum planning committees. Just as their approaches varied from study and discussion to active involvement so, too, did their range of topics vary. Within and across organizations topics were reviewed which were philosophically and theoretically at variance. The purpose of this chapter is to identify these topics of interest and to explore whether or not there were unique concerns among these club women or whether or not, at least in some instances, there was a modicum or degree of consensus.

The School Curriculum

The question of what children should learn in school was of perennial interest to women in organizations. During the early twentieth century, prairie society was in a continuous state of political, social, and economic flux. If children were to be equipped to function within this society, it was important that the schools kept pace with change. Members of women's organizations were prepared to ensure that they did. Many of the curricular innovations which these women espoused reflected the current educational concepts of the day.

Even in the midst of the First World War, members of these urban clubs created time for school matters. The Women's University Club conducted special meetings in this period for its members and the community to hear Public School Supervisors discuss their work in relation to the curriculum. School Board candidates were invited to explain their points of view with respect to kindergartens, the teaching of music and art in the public schools, and the effects of retrenchment upon educational efficiency.[1] At times the clubs joined forces in attempting to heighten their influence upon the curriculum. For example, the Musical Club and the Women's University Club joined in trying to persuade the Department of Education to begin training for cultural and leisure time pursuits by having music taught in the high schools.[2] The clubs demonstrated considerable initiative in this early period. An investigation of the high school curriculum was carried out by a ten member committee of the Women's University Club. After ascertaining what curricular changes were being considered, they compiled a report for the Department of Education outlining what the Club itself desired for the schools. Their recommendations were in keeping with the ideas of the new education. The traditional, academic thrust of the curriculum was to be redirected through the inclusion of compulsory courses in manual training and household arts in the public schools, and optional ones at the high school level. Anticipating the Department of Education by nearly twenty years, they recommended that there be no homework in the public schools until grade V, and that the hours of both the public and high schools be shortened.[3]

The interest of Edmonton club women in the curricula of the schools continued unabated during the inter-war period. The value of their input was recognized by the

Department of Education in its curriculum revisions. Under the UFA administration the opinions of certain of the Edmonton women's organizations were sought by the Department. In the early 1920s, for example, G. Fred McNally, Supervisor of Schools, chaired the Departmental committee to revise the high school curriculum. Before instituting any changes, he wrote to the Women's University Club asking for suggestions. The Club responded that it would like to see a diversification of the curriculum through an increase in the number of optional subjects and, in a measure designed to heighten teacher training standards, it recommended that the requirements for normal school entrance be raised from grade XI to grade XII.[4] As a result of this club's interest, it was invited to serve on the Department's lay committee to aid in devising the first draft of the revised course of study for secondary schools.[5] The Women's Canadian Club also was approached on this matter, but the request arrived too late for the Club to act.[6]

Investigations of school curricula by club women often were conducted independently of the Department of Education. In 1932, the education committee of the Women's University Club decided, of its own accord, to examine secondary education in the province. Questionnaires were sent to high school principals in Banff, Cardston, Lethbridge, Macleod, Red Deer, Vegreville, and Wetaskiwin, and to the Superintendent of Schools in Edmonton. Dr. Geneva Misener, a member of both the University Club and the Alberta Teachers' Association, contributed her own findings in the form of an address on the objectives of secondary education.[7]

Two years later, the Department of Education was ready to commence its own reassessment of the secondary school curriculum. It too, began by sending a questionnaire to interested parties within the community asking what changes should be made in the schools and what the schools should be expected to accomplish.[8] When the Women's University Club received its copy of the questionnaire, a special meeting of the executive immediately was convened during which discussions centered on the great changes taking place in society and the need for the high schools to accommodate these new developments. Specific problems, such as the advisability of extending the system of recommendation employed in grade IX to the higher grades, also were addressed. The education committee of the WUC chaired a general meeting which took the form of "An Open Forum on Curriculum Changes in High Schools" where all club members were encouraged to express their views.[9] The Women's University Club availed itself of the opportunity to have its views registered in the planning stages of the Department's reorganization of the high school curriculum.

The interest of the Women's University Club in school curricula tended to be broad and all encompassing whereas, by way of contrast, the Edmonton Home Economics Association tended to confine its curricular activities to its own area of professional expertise. Beginning in 1936, the Association worked closely with the Department of Education in preparing home economics courses for the schools.[10] At the request of Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools, a special curriculum committee was established within the Association in 1938, to further develop the courses of study for the intermediate and high school grades. The committee adopted an orientation in harmony with the progressive education reformers of the period by endeavoring to ensure that the materials it included drew upon the experiences of the students and had relevance to their lives. To achieve this, the courses had to take into account the questions of (1) What the high school girl does, (2) What the girls do after school, and (3) What homemakers actually do in their own homes. This information was attained through questionnaires, and only after the results were tabulated did the committee create the courses. These were ready for introduction in the schools by the fall of 1939.[11] Additionally, the Association accepted Dr. Newland's request that they create a unit in home economics for inclusion in a Departmental correspondence course in agriculture. A committee began this work in October 1938.[12]

By 1940, the Department of Education was ready for a revision of the course in home economics for the intermediate grades. A permanent committee comprised of home economics teachers from across the province was appointed for this purpose; those teachers who resided in Edmonton were members of the city's Home Economics Association. The revised course was to embody even more features of a progressive education philosophy. For example, the course was to be based on the principle that home-making was a co-operative enterprise. This meant the abandonment of individual units arranged in a series, and the adoption of a program of activities integrated around the theme of the home. The course was to provide for an interchange between home economics and general shop so that the boys would participate in some home economics activities and the girls in some shop work. The revised home economics course was to facilitate direct contact between the classroom and the local community. It was to include instruction in health. Finally, the former divisions between the activities of grades VII, VIII, and IX were to be abandoned in favor of integration. A similar revision was to begin for the high school course in 1941.[13]

The Edmonton Home Economics Association's participation in the creation of school curricula represented the culmination of a battle which this organization had waged since its formation in 1923. At its third meeting, the education convener reported that she had discussed the proposed abolition of home economics from the schools with the Edmonton School Board. Discussions did not lead to the desired action.[14] The Association soon learned that it could not always count on the support of other women's organizations in the furtherance of its interests. For example, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE reported in 1923 that the majority of its primary chapters were in favor of eliminating home economics courses from schools.[15] Yet the Edmonton Home Economics Association continued its efforts to preserve the study of home economics in the city's schools. As well, as early as 1923, the Association's clothing committee sought to modify the school curriculum by encouraging the establishment of scientifically based clothing courses.[16] It was several years before the Association achieved success in this area. As late as 1932, when rumors concerning the imminent closure of the Camrose Normal School had surfaced, the education committee of the EHEA voiced its concern that such a closure would undermine the provision of home economics courses for teachers.[17]

Even when the Association appeared to have won its struggle and was actively engaged in the preparation of home economics courses for Alberta's schools, it still refused to relax its vigilance. When it heard that new school laboratories were being constructed in 1937, it attempted to ensure that they were up to modern standards by sending a representative to the proper authorities to discuss new materials and ideas.[18] If home economics courses were to be effective, it was crucial that the school boards provided the necessary teaching facilities. In 1939, the Association felt that the facilities in Edmonton schools were inadequate, so it sent a motion expressing this view to the Chairman of the Edmonton Public School Board.[19] The Association also was careful not to allow support for home economics courses to wane. From time to time it sent letters to various education officials pointing out the value of these courses to the schools.

Association members must have felt some satisfaction in 1939 when the Deputy Minister, G. Fred McNally, reported that home economics was being taught in ninety-eight centers across the province. His conclusion was that home economics and general shop courses were very popular with parents and students and that they "assist[ed] greatly in increasing the holding power of the school."[20] In the following year he noted the continued growth of home economics and general shop courses. Based upon the inquiries from school boards and individuals, the Deputy Minister predicted that the availability of these courses would continue to grow, "even in spite of the war." His enthusiasm was indicated by his comment, "it is astonishing that educationists have overlooked this medium of educational development for so long."[21]

Recognizing that it had an ally, the Association determined to press its advantage by proposing that the Department of Education appoint a Home Economics Supervisor for the province. This was done in 1944.[22]

While the Edmonton Home Economics Association was highly assertive in its promotion of one particular school subject, the Women's University Club demonstrated similar aggressive interest and leadership, only on a broader base of educational matters. University Club members perceived themselves to be the educational leaders among the city's women's organizations. The Club's own opinion regarding its role was put forward in a report given by the education convener in 1924 :

> It has been my privilege during the past year to carry the resolutions of this society to other bodies more powerful numerically and more strongly organized than our own. I find on the part of these societies a disposition to accept our findings without much question - not that they are indifferent or ill-informed but that they look upon us as a body of educated women organized in the interests of education. They expect from us sound conclusions based upon mature and careful judgment. This is quite as it should be but it should warn us against hurried discussions and hasty decisions. It would be an eminently fine thing for the University Club to lead other women's organizations in educational matters. It places however upon our membership a measure of responsibility which I hope we may be willing to accept and able to sustain.[23]

The Women's University Club went to considerable effort to establish its position as the educational voice of Edmonton's women's organizations. The Club was a member of the Edmonton Local Council of Women, an umbrella organization comprised of affiliated societies. For that matter, each of the six clubs represented in this study was a member of the LCW at one time or another. In January1922, the Women's University Club began pressuring the LCW to establish a standing committee in education. It was felt that such a committee would be able to anticipate educational problems and be prepared to speak out in encouraging improvements. More importantly, it would be a larger body through which the Women's University Club could make known its recommendations.[24]

In February, the Club sent a resolution to the LCW stating that an education committee would encourage the study and discussion of educational questions, serve as a medium for circulating information among affiliated societies, and be a clearing house of opinion on matters affecting education.[25] When the Council chose not act on the matter, the University Club resorted to other tactics of persuasion. Each year, the LCW sent its affiliated societies a list of persons nominated to fill the positions of its various offices. When the University Club received its list in December 1922, it refused to vote for any of the nominees. Instead, it drew the Council's attention to the fact that there still was no education committee but, in the event that such a committee was added to the list of executive offices, the University Club nominated one of its own members, a Mrs. Bailey, as convener.[26] The Club got its education committee.

Education was an important matter to women in organizations and school curricula was, most naturally, one of their primary areas of interest. Clubs considered it their obligation to know what children were learning in the school system. For this reason, they often studied school programs, both through independent initiative and at the urging of the Department of Education. It was not unusual for certain of the organizations to serve on lay committees for the creation of school curricula, other's involvement was confined to submitting the occasional suggestion for courses or filing protests. Many of the ideas espoused by women in these organizations reflected the basic tenets of the child-centered and activity reform ideas of the period. They encouraged preparing children for cultural and leisure time pursuits, providing optional courses to offset a rigidly academic curriculum, less homework, and better qualified teachers. The organizations could be assertive and action-oriented when it came to educational issues. The Edmonton Home Economics Association fought for many years to have home economics courses in the schools, and ultimately, it was the members themselves who wrote the courses. As these members of the EHEA attempted to make courses relevant to the experiences of girls, they drew upon the ideas and practices in vogue during the period.

Examinations

The inter-war period was a time of increasing enrollments in Alberta's secondary schools. This phenomenon caught the interest of the Edmonton women's organizations. One of the speakers featured at a meeting of the Women's Canadian Club in 1919 suggested a need for change in the country's school systems. Classrooms that were expected to function with from thirty-five to forty students were alleged to be a waste of money and a handicap to the children. In the speaker's rather modern view, education was to draw out every potentiality of the child's mind. He charged women with the responsibility for ensuring that education met this goal. He went on to warn Club members of the inaccuracy of the belief that equality of educational opportunity existed for every child. Hundreds of large families absolutely could not afford the costs of a secondary education for their children, and university, even with a scholarship, was out of the question. Brains were not the monopoly of wealth; it was up to every community to provide the facilities for the education of all children.[27]

One of the Edmonton women's organizations was willing to consider a radical measure to make it possible for more children to complete a high school education. A resolution, put forward by one of the primaries to the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, recommended the elimination of grade XII from the Alberta school system. If the total number of years required for a secondary education were reduced, more children would be able to complete it. The Municipal Chapter decided to send this resolution out to its twenty primary chapters for their consideration. The majority of chapters reported that they were in favor of leaving the matter in the hands of the school boards and the idea was pursued no further.[28]

The Department of Education evinced extreme concern about the rising enrollments in the province's secondary schools. After hearing the recommendations of a committee created to examine this problem, the Department decided to modify the high school curriculum. It retained the traditional academic courses required for entrance to normal school or university, but added commercial and technical subjects for those who wished to enter the work-force, and general courses for those not oriented to programs of further study. This diversification of the curriculum, which was designed and implemented between 1923 and 1925, was intended to meet the more varied needs and capabilities of a rapidly growing and ever diversifying secondary school population. The Women's University Club of Edmonton, together with the United Farm Women of Alberta and the Alberta Women's Institute, served on the Departmental committee to examine the secondary education problem.

Although the Women's University Club supported the recommendations of the committee, it did so with certain reservations. Club members feared that the trend toward higher secondary enrollments would lead to a lowering of academic standards. The solution, as they saw it, was to raise examination standards. The Department of Education already had raised its examination standards in 1922, so that they aligned with those of the other three western provinces. At that time students were required to attain a mark of at least forty per cent on each examination paper, and a minimum of fifty per cent on the total average, in order to pass. The Women's University Club felt that the time had come in 1924 to raise those standards to a "passing grade of fifty per cent on each subject for entrance to High School and in all succeeding grades."[29] The Club solicited, and obtained the support of the United Farm Women of Alberta and the Alberta Women's Institute on this matter. Each of the organizations sent resolutions to the Department of Education with the result that in 1925, a mark of fifty per cent was required for credit in each subject.[30]

However, as secondary enrollments continued to soar, the Women's University Club still was not convinced that it had done everything possible to maintain and protect academic achievement. In 1926, the Club reminded the Department of Education to adhere strictly to the fifty per cent standard, and it put forward some other suggestions. Some years previously, the Department had reversed its traditional policy of confidentiality regarding students' marks on departmental examinations and began recording the marks obtained on each subject on students' diplomas. The Women's University Club wanted this to be taken even further; their suggestion was that the Department publish the examination results according to merit. They also wondered if it would be advisable to charge all high school students a fee which would be returned at the end of the year, provided the students made a reasonable showing in their work.[31]

Generally, women's organizations applauded and encouraged efforts to increase educational opportunities for children. When the Department of Education, during the 1920s, took steps to diversify the curriculum, this action both acknowledged the differing interests and capabilities of children and made some provision to serve these interests. As more children gained access to the province's secondary educational facilities, a readily discernible change occurred in the school population. Intellectual abilities varied to a greater degree as did vocational and career path choices. Whereas formerly, the majority of high school children intended to enter normal school or university, this no longer was the case. Now a greater range of possibilities had to be addressed. Members of Edmonton women's clubs displayed some of the same contradictions and ambivalence present at the time. Some of their actions had foundation in their concern for children and a more permissive, open system of education. Yet, at the same time, many of these same reform advocates were equally visible and vocal in support of adherence to rigorous and challenging academic standards fearing that the new vocational and general courses, however necessary, might undermine the quality of academic performance in high school.

Textbooks

The 1920s have been characterized as an era of nationalism.[32] It was a period in which people questioned whether their primary allegiance was to Britain and the Empire or to Canada. The idea that Canada came first took shape gradually, and over the course of its emergent ascendancy it created resistance, confusion, and ambiguity. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire met the problem head-on in 1920 when a member of one of its primaries, the Cardinal Mercier Chapter, stated that some of the women were "nationalists," that they wished to see Canada established as an independent nation. This remark sparked a furor within the organization. Another primary, the 49th Edmonton Regiment, attempted to play the role of conciliator. It presented a resolution to the Municipal Chapter which pointed out that there appeared to be "much doubt and misunderstanding . . . as to what country our Loyalty is due: whether it is England and the Empire or only Canada." In the interest and welfare of the Order, the Chapter recommended that the constitution be amended to emphasize "our king," and that references to "country" be deleted in favor of the word "Empire."[33] This resolution was endorsed by both the Municipal and Provincial Chapters, but not before the controversy exacted its toll.[34] The Cardinal Mercier Chapter disbanded in defense of its member who had first raised the nationalism issue. The Mistanusk Chapter detected a "nationalist" within its midst and called for her resignation; she refused and the Chapter disbanded.[35] The uncertainty of IODE members as to where their loyalties should lie was reflected in the disbandment of several chapters. In the early 1920s, at least twenty primaries were affiliated with the Edmonton Municipal Chapter; by mid-decade an average of only five or six primaries were represented at the Municipal Chapter's meetings.

The growth of a nationalist sentiment was a gradual process, members of women's organizations were no different than other Canadians in their feelings of ambiguity and uncertainty as to their political philosophy. Yet during the time when they were sorting their allegiances out, the Edmonton club women remained united on one particular issue: they disliked the impact of American culture upon Canada and, in the case of the schools, they felt that there was something they could do about it.[36] Organization members had long taken it upon themselves to examine the contents of textbooks used in Alberta school curricula. In 1920, the education secretary of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE drew the members' attention to the fact that the textbooks used in the grade XII history curriculum were supplied by a United States firm, and that they contained a supplement that applauded the part Americans had taken in the Great War. Great Britain hardly was mentioned at all and, when it was, the statements were "untruthful and inflammatory."[37] Mr. Ross, the Deputy Minister of Education, was interviewed concerning the matter. The Women's University Club also protested the use of the American history textbooks. It sent a resolution to the Deputy Minister asking the Department to have British publications replace the American texts. In a written reply, Mr. Ross explained that the American texts in question, *Myers' History of the World*, had been selected by a committee of educationists appointed by the Territorial Government when the Hon. F.W.G. Haultain was Minister of Education. The texts were re-endorsed in 1910 by a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. H.M. Tory, President of the University of Alberta. Mr. Ross informed the Club that the Minister had cancelled his authorization of *Myers' History* and that other American texts would be replaced by Canadian or British publications as soon as satisfactory ones became available.[38] The Municipal Chapter of the IODE announced in a meeting that "On account of the various protests sent in by the chapters of Alberta, especially from Edmonton and Calgary, *Myers' History* has been cancelled, and *Botsford's*, published by Macmillan Company, Toronto, has taken its place on the curriculum."[39]

The issue of American textbooks did not end with this incident. In 1927 the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE protested the use of so many American textbooks in the schools and recommended that comparable texts be purchased within the Empire.[40] By 1936, the Provincial Chapter also became involved. It forwarded a strongly worded resolution to Premier Aberhart, Minister of Education indicating

> . . . that with the introduction of the new course of studies there is grave danger of the introduction into the schools of Alberta of textbooks written by American authors, and therefore colored with an American point of view.
>
> The Provincial Chapter of Alberta . . . would therefore strongly urge against the adoption or adaptation of any American text for use in the schools of Alberta, feeling sure that there are Canadian authors who can produce equally satisfactory texts especially with encouragement to do so.[41]

Even textbooks published within the Empire were subject to criticism. As nationalist sentiment grew, textbooks were faulted for not placing an appropriate degree of emphasis upon Canada. The Women's Canadian Club of Calgary had this criticism in mind when it approached both its Edmonton counterpart and the Women's University Club of Edmonton to join in a petition to the government to change the history textbooks used in grades VII, VIII, and IX. The Calgary Club pointed out that these textbooks scarcely mentioned Canada's part in the Great War, and it suggested that an addendum be prepared to embody a fuller account of Canada's service to the Empire.[42]

The importance of textbooks within the Alberta school curriculum cannot be overemphasized. In these early years, when teachers were not particularly well trained and often were inexperienced, when the majority of the province's schools were rural, one-roomed, and without reference libraries, textbooks were central to the course of study. They were a primary source of information and were vital to both teachers and children.[43] Inasmuch as club women were cognizant of this fact, it is not surprising that they subjected the prescribed textbooks to careful scrutiny and attempted to ensure that views they valued were present. For many this required due attention to a Christian, Anglo-Saxon point of view, and for some, it meant special attention to the distinctive role of Canada as a nation.

The first free textbooks distributed to Alberta schoolchildren were the Alexandra Readers. These focussed upon the British Empire as being the most progressive and enlightened of civilizations, the British people as the most intelligent and moral.[44] In 1923, the Alexandra Readers were replaced by the Canadian Readers in the province's rural schools.[45] As the title suggests, these new Readers reflected the nationalistic shift in the country by including more stories on Canadians.[46] Even so, Edmonton club women were dissatisfied with the quality of the Readers. The Local Council of Women called for the replacement of the Canadian Readers with a series that was better graded, contained more interesting material, and incorporated a more modern approach to the study of reading and literature. The Council also felt that peace should be stressed and war not glorified, and they suggested that stickers inscribed with the Ten Commandments be placed in the new school Readers.[47] In 1933 the Department of Education announced its tentative acceptance of the Highroads to Reading series, published by Gage, Macmillan, Nelson and Ryerson of Toronto.[48]

At the outbreak of the Second World War, several thousand copies of a patriotic pamphlet entitled *Canada Within the Empire* were sent by the National Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire to Alberta for distribution in the schools. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter ordered one hundred and thirty-five of these pamphlets, one for every grade VII, VIII, and IX classroom in Edmonton.[49] Thus we see evidence of club women taking actions to ensure that their ideas found a place within the schools. The Alberta Provincial Chapter of the IODE indicated to the Department of Education that, in its opinion, the pamphlet would have a special significance in foreign-born districts, and that it was forwarding copies of the pamphlet to the Department so that the Inspectors could distribute them in the schools of these districts. The Department complied, and copies of *Canada Within the Empire* were sent to Inspectors in fifteen Alberta school districts.[50]

The issue of textbooks, the perspective from which they were written and the quality of the material, was another matter which motivated club women to become involved in the schools. Club women preferred well written textbooks that emphasized Canada and the Empire, they were firmly opposed to texts which presented an American perspective to Alberta schoolchildren. Many of the ideas associated with the reforms of the 1930s in curriculum and school organization were visibly related to American theory and practice. Club women were quick to warn of the dangers of materials colored with the American point of view, as were some school-based reformers who argued that the new program was "home-grown." It is likely that concerns about American influence expressed by club women, when added to other concerns about foreign encroachment, contributed to the Department of Education's selective introduction of progressive education practices. When progressive education came to the schools, it was highly adapted to the specific needs of the province's school system. There was no wholesale transplantation of American ideas into the schools. Interest groups, such as the Edmonton women's organizations, helped to ensure that this was so.

Medals and Scholarships

Club women contributed ideas for school curricula, they scrutinized reading matter and, if American materials or concepts were to be used in the schools, the women made certain that the information was adapted to convey a point of view acceptable to people living in Alberta. Club members also fostered the maintenance of rigorous standards of achievement once the secondary school population began to swell and the curriculum broadened. They provided encouragement and recognition when those standards were met. Most of the Edmonton women's organizations gave medals or scholarships to children who did well in school. The Women's Canadian Club annually presented medals to students having the highest standing in grades IX and X at Edmonton's Victoria and Strathcona high schools.[51] In 1928, the Club decided to include all of the city's high schools in this medal competition.[52] The Women's University Club provided an annual scholarship of twenty-five dollars to the grade XI female student in Alberta who obtained the highest percentage in English, history, French, and Latin. A scholarship of fifty dollars was provided to the female student in Arts at the University of Alberta who achieved the highest standing in general proficiency, and a gold medal went to the fourth year student with the highest marks in any faculty at the University.[53]

Scholastic achievement in the city's separate schools was recognized by the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League. Each year the League donated a silver cup to the winners of the high school debate and cash prizes were given for compositions in religious education.[54] The League also encouraged Edmonton high school girls to compete for its national scholarship which required a one thousand word essay on a particular topic. For example, in 1931 the subject was "How did Catholic women assist in the early settlement of Canada?", in 1933 it was "The development in broadcasting during the last five years."[55]

It was the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire that was most actively involved in the presentation of awards to schoolchildren. For years, primary chapters under its wing gave prizes to public school students who wrote winning compositions on patriotic and historical subjects. At one point, when the organization contemplated a change in this scheme, the superintendent of schools indicated that he was "anxious that the IODE should not relax in its interest in the schools."[56] He need not have worried, the Municipal Chapter continued to recognize scholastic achievement throughout the inter-war period. By the late 1920s, this work had grown to include schools attended by New Canadians. A case in point was the Stanislawa school situated in Mundare, Alberta. The two-roomed school had one English and one Ukrainian teacher, and the majority of the students were of Ukrainian descent. Two of the Municipal Chapter's primaries took a special interest in this school. In 1929, they provided six medals for the best compositions on the topic of "Empire Day," and they presented twelve prizes for highest standing in history in grades VII and VIII.[57]

The Municipal Chapter contributed substantial amounts of money toward Provincial and National IODE awards, such as the War Memorial Scholarship and the Coronation Bursary. The largest award for which the Municipal Chapter itself was responsible was the Municipal Scholarship, which was instituted to mark the Chapter's twenty-fifth anniversary in 1936. The members voted to endorse a resolution which established this as an annual scholarship of one hundred dollars, to be awarded to a boy or girl who achieved high standing in grade XI in any one of the city's high schools. The scholarship was to recognize the merit of the student, but it also was intended to assist in the furtherance of his or her high school education.[58] This created some difficulty when the Superintendent of Schools informed the Municipal Chapter that there would be no departmental examinations in grade XI after 1938 and that, in his opinion, the scholarship should then go to a grade XII student.[59] The members relectantly agreed to this suggestion, even though it meant that the scholarship obviously would not be used to aid students in completing high school. Thus, in 1938, the Municipal Chapter asked that the five high school principals each nominate a grade XII student and between them select the one who was in greatest need.[60] In the following year, however, the members of the Municipal Chapter hit upon a way to restore the original intention of their scholarship. They passed a motion that in future, the Edmonton Municipal Scholarship of one hundred dollars was to be given to a grade IX student of outstanding ability, for the purpose of recognizing his merit, as well as assisting him to complete his high school education. To ensure that this intention was not violated, the scholarship was to be divided into three annual payments which the winner would receive at the start of grade X, XI, and XII.[61] Clearly this organization was willing to adapt to change within the school system, but it did it on its own terms.

Aid

Club women were more than willing to provide whatever assistance was necessary to ensure that children had access to a sound education. This aid took many forms. To the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League it meant cash donations to the Edmonton Separate School Board for religious instruction, and occasionally, loans to poorly paid teachers.[62] To the Women's University Club it meant the creation of a Loan Fund for the aid of female students enrolled at the University of Alberta.[63] To the Edmonton Home Economics Association it was money donated towards circulating libraries for intermediate schools.[64] Each of the clubs was mindful not to duplicate the efforts of its sister organizations. Among the Edmonton women's organizations, educational aid to settlers and to rural schools was the distinct purview of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE. When, for example, the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton was asked to appoint a committee to gather, inspect, and send out literature to country school teachers, it declined because such work already was carried out by the IODE.[65]

Much of the educational assistance supplied by the IODE went directly to individual children. Most often, requests for textbooks and supplies were sent by parents, children, or other interested parties, to the Edmonton Municipal Chapter. The requests were then divided among the primary chapters, each of which assumed the responsibility for ensuring that its requests were met. Under the auspices of the Municipal Chapter, books and supplies were provided for correspondence courses to children living outside organized school districts. The Chapter also provided needed materials to children participating in the regular rural school system. Usually the requests were small enough that they could be handled by individual primaries, but several cases arose over the inter-war period that required the combined efforts of the primaries. A "cripple boy" in need of educational training came to the attention of the Municipal Chapter in 1921. Between the primaries, he was provided with a sixty-five dollar course at the Elston Business College, room and board at the Presbyterian Home, and carfare.[66] Similarly, attention was directed to a soldier's widow, who was not eligible for a pension, and who was having some considerable difficulty in supporting her six children. With ten of the primaries volunteering to help, the Municipal Chapter was able to provide a business college course for the eldest daughter of the family.[67]

Unfortunately, the Municipal Chapter was unable to meet every request put to it. Some proposals, such as one for a special scholarship for a small town girl so that she could take grade XI, were denied by the Municipal Chapter.[68] In truth, the sheer volume of the requests put a strain upon the organization. One solution was to try to ensure that course textbooks were used by more than one child. To make this workable, the Municipal Chapter sent required textbooks to the nearest school nurse, so that she could forward them to the particular child who had requested them. Then, when that child was finished the course for which they were intended, the texts were returned to the school nurse, who sent them on to the Municipal Chapter for redistribution.[69] The Municipal Chapter's frustration in trying to meet each child's request for aid became apparent in 1937, when it filed a motion with the Provincial Chapter, stating that since the Edmonton Chapter was continually receiving requests for school supplies that were not provided under the Provincial Textbook Fund, the use of the Fund should be broadened "to supply not only textbooks, but also other educational supplies for public schools."[70] This protest was without result. In 1940, in response to a request from an Evansburg mother sent to the Department of Education, the Chief Inspector of Schools indicated that:

> The Department of Education has no appropriation from which it can supply the children of parents in necessitous circumstances with text books. The Legislature does not give us an appropriation for this purpose and we have therefore no money which we can spend in providing texts for pupils.[71]

The Inspector then directed the mother to the IODE.

Depression and drought were serious problems on the western prairies in the early 1920s; in the dry belt areas of Alberta, the situation was catastrophic. Escalating land prices, a prolonged drought, and a severe post-war depression, meant that people on the prairies were faced with high costs of living and low crop prices.[72] In the midst of this they somehow had to provide an adequate schooling for their young. Some of the strategies involved in the effort to maintain the schools were the application for government loans, the addition of territories to widen tax bases, the operation of short term schools through the summer months, co-operation between two to four districts in the operation of a single school, and in desperate circumstances, the surrender of a school to an official trustee.[73] These efforts sometimes transformed rural schools into centers of "conflict, community discord, and social anxiety."[74] The United Farmers of Alberta administration attempted to alleviate this distress in 1929, when the Hon. Perren Baker, Minister of Education, introduced a bill for the creation of large units of administration. Under this bill, the individual school districts, each operated by a local school board, were to be combined into school divisions run by divisional boards and superintendents. Teachers were to be secured by the divisional boards and paid according to fixed salary schedules; the larger taxable areas would mean extra revenue for school health services and the hiring of specially qualified art, music, and language teachers. However, even though the bill was introduced at two successive sessions of the Legislature, serious opposition from the Alberta School Trustees' Association and the Municipalities Association ensured that it did not pass.[75] Not until1936, under the new Social Credit administration, was legislation passed making the establishment of large units possible.

The severe difficulties faced by prairie people in keeping their schools alive did not go unheeded by the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE. By the mid-1920s this Chapter extended its educational work to include not only aid to individual children but also to entire schools. Since many rural schools functioned with only limited supplies, the Municipal Chapter began by sending such schools small libraries of books, geographical magazines, and newspapers. The Chapter also supplied travelling libraries to be shared among all the schools within a district. Additionally, when rural schools were in particular need, they were "adopted" by the Chapter's individual primaries. In these cases, a primary would establish personal contact with the teacher and undertake to provide books, magazines, scribblers, calendars, clothing, and even a tree and presents at Christmas.[76] The Department of Education's reorganization of rural school districts into divisions in the mid-1930s did not erase the need for IODE aid to rural schools. If anything, the period saw an increase in the Municipal Chapter's activities in this area.

Edmonton club women's interest in children brought them directly to the schools where they placed their imprint upon the educational reforms of the inter-war period. By making suggestions regarding courses, by filing protests, by serving on lay committees, and by writing course material, these women ensured that their ideas were incorporated into the school curricula. Edmonton club women also guarded against any erosion of the quality of education. While they applauded the diversification of the secondary school curriculum because it made education relevant to greater numbers of children, they insisted that academic standards be continually met. They encouraged and fostered school attendance by offering scholarships and medals. Large units of administration were intended to place rural education on par with that available in urban centers, but the realization of this goal was slow in developing. In the interim, the clubs continued to provide rural schools with the materials necessary to an adequate education. Finally, through insisting upon textbooks written by Canadians and published in Canada, Edmonton club women were able to moderate children's exposure to American ideas and practices, at least in the schools. However, American popular culture reached Canadian children through other channels, including motion pictures and radio. Club women's efforts to combat these sources are addressed in Chapter V.

Educational Issues

Edmonton club women were well versed in the educational issues of the inter-war period. In addition to their involvement in the schools, club women examined education from within their organizations, in education committees and study groups, and by having invited speakers address them at meetings. The issues they studied often mirrored the on-going developments and concerns affecting Alberta schools.

Shortly after the First World War, the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton invited the Hon. George P. Smith, Minister of Education, to provide a luncheon address on the some of the problems currently confronting education in the province. The Minister pointed to the need for a broad and democratic education for a progressive nation. This presented a tremendous problem in connection with the rural districts where little secondary or high school education was available. The problem was as great in Alberta as it was in the rest of Canada and the United States. Fully two-thirds of all children were educated in rural or village schools. Without secondary school facilities, these children's education usually ended in the primary grades. The task before the government was to bring education "to the doors of the rural people."[77] The Canadianization of the foreign born was another educational problem which the Minister hoped to solve by stiffening the compulsory attendance act and by attempting to entice teachers into taking positions in non-English districts. This was one of the reasons behind the provisions that were being made for men and women returning from overseas to enter normal schools without fees, and with one year less from high school.[78]

Club women tended to believe that the educational problems of the province were their problems, and that it was their duty to assist in finding solutions.[79] Since club members researched other educational systems, they were able to place a knowledgeable perspective upon Alberta's problems. In the early 1920s, the Women's University Club studied the English and Scottish systems of education, then the following year they examined the educational systems of Canada with a view to comparing Alberta with the other provinces.[80] Similarly, the Edmonton Home Economics Association did separate studies of home economics programs in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia schools which they compared to conditions in Alberta.[81]

A variety of educational issues were studied within Edmonton women's organizations. Members tended to be interested in educational methods. At times they concentrated upon the practical aspects of the topic. For instance, in 1934, the Edmonton Home Economics Association asked "Can we teach grade VII anything in Home Economics?" In 1929, the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club heard Dr. Donalda Dickie speak on how to teach history so that children would not dislike it so much. Dickie suggested that parents begin teaching history in the home, starting with the story of their own city or country, their province, the Dominion, and abroad. Once in the schools, children should learn what was in the hearts, the lives, and the minds of the people; dry constitutional history should be left until the last, and even then, presented only in general terms.[82]

The Women's University Club studied educational methods extensively. In the late 1920s, they began a study of "Modern Methods and Theories," and they established a library of materials related to the topic. At the same time a study group, comprised of twelve women, met once every two weeks to discuss the writings of one of the early child-centered educational theorists, Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[83] By the mid-1930s the Club was studying "The Laws of Learning," "Common Educational Fallacies," and "Personality and Education." Members of the educational committee read papers on these subjects to the general membership and then provided lists of reference books for further reading.[84]

Another educational issue which caught the interest of the Women's University Club was student testing. They first delved into this topic in 1920 when they held separate meetings on intelligence tests, retardation and acceleration, and the curriculum, and it came up again in 1936 when a paper was presented on mental tests.[85] The Department of Education introduced new testing techniques in 1937, as a component of the revised school program. In that year the High School Entrance Examination Board began using the cumulative record cards of students. These contained information relating to mental ability, special interests and aptitudes, previous marks, and health and personality. The cards, together with the results on the grade IX examination, were used by the Board to guide students' choices in the selection of a high school program. Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools, indicated that the Board's "liberal use of the newer techniques of examining," would facilitate the "attempt to measure all-round growth and development of the pupils rather than their ability to reproduce memorized but meaningless 'facts.'"[86] In 1939, the Department of Education identified the new examination procedures as including "intelligence ratings, general information tests, sight tests in appreciation, new techniques in written English, laboratory records, and survey tests."[87]

A related issue was that of educational and vocational guidance. Owing to the severe crowding of secondary schools with students of varied abilities and ambitions, the Department of Education began to consider whether these students might benefit from some form of guidance in their course selection. Most students chose the traditional academic program designed for a university or normal school entrance, even though their talents may or may not have pointed in that direction. In his *Annual Report* of 1932, J.T. Ross, Deputy Minister of Education, noted that in many of the larger schools in Europe and the United States, educational guidance received marked attention. Providence, Rhode Island had instituted a rather complicated scheme of guidance for each of its senior high schools. In this particular instance, each high school had six advisers appointed from the teaching staff. Each adviser assumed charge of a class when it entered the high school and saw it through the entire school course. He was in charge of grading, classification, choice of electives and special programs for the students in his class. Group guidance, in the form of student forums and discussions, also was utilized. Although this scheme was considered too elaborate for Alberta schools, the Deputy thought that "some action should be taken towards introducing certain features of it in our larger schools."[88]

Edmonton club women were examining the issue of school guidance at the same time that it was being given Departmental consideration. They entertained different viewpoints on the issue. Dr. R.C. Wallace, President of the University of Alberta, provided his thoughts when he addressed the Women's University Club in 1931 on "The Advisability of Choice in a Liberal Education." According to Dr. Wallace, the United States had gone much too far in permitting options in its university and high school courses. It was a controversy between the interest motive and the discipline motive in education, and human nature, being what it was, would be motivated by interest. The real difficulty was that students were compelled to take too many courses which they would never use, when they really should have been taking courses for which their minds were fitted.[89] Although the use of school guidance might have aided in the solution to this problem, Dr. Wallace stopped short of recommending its implementation. A teacher, addressing the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club in 1932, did not. In her view, the high schools had failed to fit young men and women for life in a changing civilization. Too many students were trained for work in the same fields, with the result that "at the top, the ladder [was] overloaded with professional men and women for whom there [was] not enough to do."[90] High schools needed to prepare students for a variety of occupations, and vocational guidance, offered when students were about to enter high school, would result "in a happier life for the individual student, and a saving of wasteful expenditure on the part of those responsible for his education."[91]

In addition to hearing the thoughts of professional members of the community, club women conducted their own investigations into the issue of guidance. The Women's University Club organized a study group and purchased the latest books on child guidance to circulate among its members.[92] The Club's education committee wrote a report on "Guidance in Secondary Education" which pointed to the need for specialists to guide bewildered young people through the difficult stage of adolescence. The different methods of providing guidance in schools were noted. Some schools left guidance to the regular staff or charged specific teachers with the duty; other schools employed guidance specialists or they shared the specialists between schools. The following is a list of the situations in which the education committee felt that a student might benefit from guidance:

> •Where there is a lack of the required ability to realize the desired ambition.
> •Sometimes it is necessary to show the failing student that failure need not be discouraging.
> •Guiding of pupils with high level capacities in cases where

the pupil is not going to utilize these capacities.
- Guidance in forming education programs. The most must be made of the time at the disposal of the pupil.
- Guidance in choice of a school.
- Guidance in choice of subjects.
- Guidance in extra curricular activities.
- Guidance of the failing student.
- Guidance of students who lack interest and application.
- Guidance of the personally maladjusted child.
- Guidance in the choice of an occupation.[93]

The report also examined the availability of guidance in Edmonton schools. The first guidance work had been done by teachers trained in the testing of intelligence and special abilities. Later, a specialist was engaged to do this work, but after a year she left to marry, and the work again reverted to the teachers. However, the situation appeared as though it was about to improve since the Edmonton School Board had recently voted a sum of money to be spent on guidance.[94]

Vocational and educational guidance were essential adjuncts to the curriculum reforms of the 1930s and 1940s. As more attention was given to meeting and satisfying student needs, there was reason to provide assistance to students in making choices about career possibilities and related school programs. The existence of and commitment to guidance in the schools was further recognition that the child-centered perspective was finding acceptance and taking root.

Challenging currents in child psychology also reflected the growing ascendancy and acceptance of new ideas about children's learning, growth and education. These ideas played a vital part in lending support to the educational reforms of the period. They were evident, as well, in teacher preparation programs and in popular magazine content on childrearing and education. Club women also were interested in the psychology of the young school-aged and adolescent child, but they had an even greater preoccupation with the pre-school child. As the British educationalist Sir Henry Newbolt stated in his address to the Women's Canadian Club: "Woman's greatest sphere of influence is in the training of the young and especially her own children."[95]

In the inter-war period this influence was under attack. According to Strong-Boag, across Canada, childcare professionals including doctors, social workers, teachers, and psychologists were attempting to enlarge their mandate to encompass the pre-school child. Through consistent attacks upon women's competence as nurturers of the young, this new group attempted to supplant maternal authority with their own superior professionalism. However, because childcare experts had much to offer that women thought might be useful, such as information on pre-natal and post-natal care or child discipline, women were prepared to allow these professionals some degree of authority.[96]

Club women's interest in child psychology underscored their desire to better understand and hence, be better mothers to, their own children. Each year between 1929 and 1936, members of the Women's University Club studied child psychology. When Dr. John Macdonald addressed one of their meetings on the subject of "Modern Psychology and the Family," the Club experienced the best turnout in membership for the year. The members' appetites for this information seemed insatiable. In one year, a study group, with an average attendance of twelve women, met every two weeks to discuss pre-school and primary problems, literature for children, religious education, the most suitable education for girls, and the teaching of childcare in American high schools.[97] The following year, a study group of fifteen women regularly presented papers and held discussions centering upon the fundamentals of child psychology and their application to the behavioral problems of children. The members felt that these meetings had helped them in developing an "open minded" attitude toward their children.[98] So pleased were they with their findings that they decided to make a gift of them to other women's organizations.[99] In 1932, yet another group was formed to study the psychology of the pre-school child, with its special focus being on the preparation of the child for school. This group concluded its efforts with a prepared statement concerning methods of teaching, for the parents of children about to commence school.[100]

Several of the Edmonton women's organizations paid considerable attention to the reform ideas associated with progressive education. For example, the progressive idea of "life as an education and education as life" was brought to a luncheon meeting of one hundred and fifty members of the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton in 1923 by Sir Michael Sadler, Vice-chancellor of the University of Leeds, Yorkshire, England. Sir Michael, a leading voice of the new education, contended that if people could grasp what the new education really meant they would find themselves "learning every day and consistently taking in new elements of truth," and if the message of the new education "brought sharp pain and the challenge of existing conditions it was nevertheless the only way to grow."[101] The involvement of the WCC with these ideas at such an early stage shows that it and other clubs contributed to a growing interest in the new education which eventually shifted from a supportive, congenial perspective to one of advocacy and reform.

As the Department of Education, later, was in the process of developing progressive reforms for the schools, Women's Canadian Club members continued to familiarize themselves with the new concepts. In 1935, they heard an address by Thomas Tilley, Director of Education for Durham, England, in which he noted that "the educator of the last century believed pupils were going out into a set frame-work of civilization, but today nobody can foresee what the world is going to be 20 years from now."[102] The new education could adapt to this situation by developing individualism in children, while at the same time emphasizing the individual's part in community life.[103] This was precisely what the new enterprise procedure, introduced into Alberta schools in 1936, was intended to accomplish. Further, Tilley believed that the arts were necessary in schools "because skillful hands were needed to make use of the added leisure time which had followed industrial progress."[104] Alberta's new program for the intermediate grades, introduced in 1937, contained elective courses "designed to develop *cultural appreciation*, and to train for leisure time hobbies and avocational pursuits."[105]

Members of the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton also learned of the concepts of Alberta's version of progressive education from the individuals who had helped to formulate them. Dr. Donalda Dickie, an active club woman and a lecturer in English at the Edmonton Normal School, was centrally involved in writing the new progressive program for the elementary grades. In 1938 she addressed the Women's Canadian Club on the new movement in education. Dickie explained that modern educationalists based their methods upon the findings of biochemists insofar as both now viewed life as "all of a piece" and "the three branches of one's organism-body, mind, and soul-react simultaneously to everything in one's environment."[106] Education was seen as the growth which came to a person as a consequence of stimulation from his environment and, therefore, the environment assumed central importance in the new education. The teacher no longer was called upon to teach the child anything, rather, she was to condition the child's environment so that he reacted in the way in which she intended. Well-educated children were those who could adjust easily and quickly to a large number of environments, and since the ability to adjust successfully was a learned reaction, it was the job of Alberta's elementary schools to aid the process through problem or project work. Subjects such as history, geography, and arithmetic were to be learned as a means to assist children in solving some problem before them. Children were to solve problems together, because it taught co-operation, which was a necessary prerequisite to the advancement of civilization.[107] Club members were highly supportive of this new movement in Alberta education. They judged the concepts, as presented by Dr. Dickie, to be "most brilliant and thoughtful."[108]

Club women sought to familiarize themselves with the new progressive programs once these programs were ready for implementation. In 1937, Dr. Dickie was convener of the education committee of the Women's University Club, and in that year the committee decided to make a study of the changes in the educational system of Alberta with a view to presenting its findings in the form of a brochure. A series of meetings, open to the general Club membership, were held at the Normal Practice School in Edmonton. At the first meeting, Dr. Dickie lead a discussion on the changes in the elementary school and gave a demonstration of enterprise work. At the second meeting, a guest speaker was invited to discuss the philosophy underlying the changes made in the intermediate curriculum. At the third meeting, another guest speaker addressed the changes in the new senior high school curriculum.[109] In 1939, the Club sent a report to the Canadian Federation of University Women outlining the changes made in the Alberta school curriculum.[110] Their efforts helped to popularize Alberta's reforms among club women at a national level.

The justification for the changes to the Alberta school programs, for the use of progressive techniques, included two major lines of thought which were interconnected. A prominent concern centered on the nature of the child and the learning process. Attention to this consideration led to concerns for activity, a broader curriculum, and the development of problem solving abilities. Education became synonymous with life rather than a means to an end such as earning a living. The school's task was to implant the germ of interest in the child so that he would continue to want to learn his entire life.[111] Other advocates of change saw the vital link between these new methods and the requirements of democracy. The threat of fascism in Europe throughout the 1930s made education for democracy an important justification for educative change. The ideological and, later, military struggle to maintain a democratic way of life brought home the fact that "the ability to think and act democratically [did] not develop automatically in children, like a sixth-year molar," it was something that had to be "taught through a living situation both at home and in the classroom."[112] The activity program in the elementary school was designed to provide this type of situation; children were encouraged to "practice democracy, and learn about it from living in it."[113]

Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools for the Department of Education, was one of the more vocal proponents of democracy in education. In an address to the Alberta School Trustees' Association in the early 1940s, Dr. Newland asked:

> What is the fundamental purpose of our system of education? Education has always been an instrument of social purposes. The purpose of education today will therefore depend on the kind of society we desire and the goals of education must be set by the needs of that society. . . . We value our society as democratic; we accept the fact of social change; and we commit ourselves to the method of science, to the free play of intelligence and to the use of freeminded discussion. Since we rely on the intelligence and goodwill of all the people, our theory of education is democracy itself; and our task for education is to direct intelligence towards social welfare, and arouse the sense of social responsibility.[114]

Education's task, then, was to bring about the social changes necessary for total democracy. One of the changes that Newland had in mind was the undermining of divisive forces, including class prejudice and racial discrimination. Another change was the substitution of society's dependence upon absolutes, with the techniques of scientific inquiry, which could be universally applied to all of society's problems. Finally, as protection against propaganda, Newland recommended that students be trained to think critically and independently.[115]

In 1941, the education committee of the Women's University Club dedicated the year's work to a study of the issues relating to education and democracy.[116] Club women seemed to be supportive of the emphasis on democracy in the schools, and in order to promote the idea even further, the IODE sponsored a school contest in 1940, in which grade IX students were instructed to produce essays on "What Democracy Means to Me." The prizes were War Saving Certificates.[117]

Through their education committees, their study groups, and their interactions with professional educators, Edmonton club women maintained a firm grasp upon the educational issues which arose in the inter-war period. Motivated by their consuming interest in children, club women examined the latest educational methods and theories, they studied the new techniques by which their children would be tested, they encouraged the introduction of educational and vocational guidance, and they furthered their knowledge of developments in child psychology. Club women familiarized themselves with progressive concepts in education, they studied them once these were in place, and they kept pace with developments in progressive theory. These women wished to ensure that children were provided with the ideas and skills for an effective shaping of the future. The school reforms of the latter 1930s indicated that the Department of Education entertained similar purposes.

The Teaching Profession

Edmonton club women established themselves as the friends and allies of schoolteachers, especially female schoolteachers. On the western prairies, in the period between the two world wars, female schoolteachers outnumbered their male colleagues by a ratio of three to one, yet in spite of their numerical dominance, their professional worth and abilities were undervalued in comparison to male teachers.[118] In the Edmonton women's organizations, female schoolteachers found a sympathetic and supportive network of active and vocal women who were unwilling to tolerate prejudice and discrimination against female teachers and who considered it their duty to act on behalf of these teachers.

Club members enjoyed amiable social relations with the city's female schoolteachers, often inviting them as guests to meetings and entertaining them at luncheons. However, evidence such as club women's study of the Parent-Teacher's Association hints at another, more serious side to their relationship, one which sought to form a working partnership between the two groups of women. Of course, Edmonton club members were interested in any means by which to strengthen women's voices on the issue of the schooling of their children. One avenue was to have women serve on school boards. The Women's University Club began agitating for this right in 1910, when they passed a resolution to further the election of women on all school boards in the province, and particularly in Edmonton and Strathcona.[119] The organizations affiliated with the Edmonton Local Council of Women then took up the issue and began nominating female candidates for the local school boards.[120] Finally, in 1917, a law was passed in Alberta which allowed the wives, daughters, and sisters of ratepayers to vote for and serve as school trustees.[121] The Local Council of Women responded by funding female candidates in the school board elections in the 1920s.[122] As trustees, women had the right to participate directly in the political decision making process for the schools and, to a limited extent it provided an avenue by which women could come to the aid of teachers.

Many of the ideas entertained within the Edmonton clubs were intended to elevate the status and recognition of teachers. Members recommended the adoption of adequate salary schedules and they looked for ways in which teachers might share a more central role in the revision of school curricula. The Women's University Club initiated a campaign to have the standard of entrance to normal school raised to grade XII and, to add force to their argument, they garnered the support of the United Farm Women of Alberta, the Women's Institutes, and the Local Council of Women.[123] A delegation of University Club women presented a resolution to Perren Baker, Minister of Education, which argued that a twelfth grade requirement would produce better qualified teachers who would be more influential in their schools and communities, and who would be less likely to remain in the profession only temporarily. Although the Minister was in sympathy with the resolution, "he did not feel it was the opportune time to act upon it."[124] The Alberta Teachers' Alliance disagreed. In 1931 the Alliance's secretary wrote to the University Club thanking the members for their efforts, and indicating that the Alliance already had taken similar steps without result.[125] The requirement of a grade XII standing for normal school entrance was not put in place until 1937.

The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League became involved in the placement of teachers in suitable positions. Beginning in 1921, the League established a Catholic Teacher Exchange. Within the space of two months, twenty-four teachers had submitted their names, and positions had been found for two.[126] Eighteen teachers were placed in Catholic schools in the following year, and the service grew thereafter.[127] Not only did women's organizations help find jobs for teachers, they also provided incentives to teachers who accepted the more difficult teaching positions. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE was involved with the Provincial Chapter in providing scholarships to teachers having experience in foreign settlements. The scholarships were intended to fund such teachers at summer school sessions, so that they would have the opportunity to hone their skills at instructing non-English students. Some of the recommended summer school courses for these teachers were Industrial Arts Methods for Rural Schools, Music Methods, Oral English, General Methods of Teaching in Elementary Schools, Voice Production and Speech, and Teaching English in High Schools.[128] At one point, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter debated the advisability of continuing this scholarship program, since the children taught in these foreign settlement schools technically were not immigrants, but children born of immigrants, and therefore they did not require specially qualified teachers. However, the prevailing opinion was that the scholarship program should continue, since the underlying intent of the funds was to bonus these teachers for teaching Canadian ideals.[129]

Although Edmonton club women were supportive of both men and women in the teaching profession, any evidence of discrimination against female schoolteachers mobilized the clubs into action. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that Canadian women teachers even felt secure enough in their profession to occasionally speak out against their inequality, and even so, it did little to change their subordinate position in the public schools.[130] Western prairie society in the inter-war period still did not particularly value female teachers "although the ranks of the teaching profession would have been virtually empty without [them]."[131] Club members recognized the importance of female teachers to the education of their children, and they were more than willing to speak out for them. In 1936, Mrs. Elsie Newland, wife of the Supervisor of Schools, presented the following resolution on behalf of the Women's University Club of Edmonton:

> **Whereas** Canadians have progressed in their social thinking
> beyond the point where sex alone debars qualified
> persons from holding positions,
> **and Whereas** the policy expressed in the motion now before
> the School Board, relative to the replacement of lady
> school principals by men, is considered by us a
> retrograde step in educational procedure,
> **Be it Resolved** that the Women's University Club of Edmonton
> express to the Edmonton School Board their strong
> disapproval of both the spirit and the letter of the
> above mentioned motion.[132]

This incident prompted the Club to conduct an examination into the extent of discrimination against female teachers in attaining administrative positions in the province. The education committee had a two-part report ready for its members in 1939. The first phase of the report was "A Psychological Analysis of Differences Which Might Hinder Women Applicants for Positions of Administration in Education", the second phase dealt with "Women in Administrative Positions in Education: The Situation in Alberta."[133] In the following year, at the suggestion of Dr. Hilda Neatby, the education committee decided to carry its investigations still further by examining "Women in Secondary Schools, Colleges, and Universities." The information for this study was gathered through questionnaires to schools and colleges in Canada and the United States.[134]

During the first term of the United Farmers of Alberta administration, the Hon. Louise McKinney was successful in having a clause inserted in the School Act which placed female schoolteachers on an equal footing with their male counterparts. The clause read as follows:

> Section 246: Notwithstanding anything herein contained, women shall be upon an absolute equality with and have the same rights and privileges, and be subject to the same penalties and disabilities as men, under this Act.[135]

Yet Mrs. Newland's protest concerning the intended replacement of women school principals with men, suggested that the Edmonton School Board was having some considerable difficulty in complying with the Act.

Evidently the Women's University Club was highly suspicious of the Edmonton School Board when it came to the matter of female schoolteachers. In 1940, the members discussed the attitude of some individuals on the Board toward married women and the teaching profession.[136] In fact, the Club had sound reasons for its suspicions since the Edmonton School Board had for years made it a practice to insist that women teachers who married must resign. The Board then offered to re-engage these women as substitute teachers at much reduced salaries. It is likely that this practice was emulated by school boards in other cities throughout the province, certainly the Medicine Hat School Board followed the same procedure, but it does not appear to have been done in rural areas where it was more difficult to obtain and retain teachers.[137] For example, the Department of Education noted in the 1920s that a number of married women had accepted teaching positions in the localities where they resided.[138] When the large units of administration were introduced in the 1930s, the Alberta Teachers' Association stated that as far as it was aware, "none of the Divisional

School Boards in the Province [made] any discrimination as between men teachers and women teachers on their staff, either with regard to marital status or retirement."[139]

Recent research on western Canadian teachers in the inter-war period has pointed to the popularity of the notion that young female teachers treated the profession as a stepping stone to marriage. Even normal school instructors were known to have joked that that they were "preparing teachers who would become wives of farmers."[140] Yet, no matter how prevalent this notion may have been, under the terms of the School Act, men and women teachers shared equal status and, therefore, women teachers could not legally be compelled to resign if they married. This issue came to a head in 1943 when the Edmonton School Board presented the following resolution:

> **Whereas** it has been the considered policy of this Board over a period of many years not to appoint married women to permanent positions on the teaching staff, and,
> **Whereas** this policy has been affirmed by various Boards from time to time since 1916, and has proved to be a reasonable and sound policy under varying economic conditions, and,
> **Whereas** under existing legislation of the Alberta School Act all teachers' contracts, other than "Substitute" or "Temporary" contracts are continuous from year to year unless cancelled or terminated, and,
> **Whereas** certain women teachers under contract with the Board have recently married and have notified the Board it is their intention to continue teaching and to exercise their rights under the contract and the Alberta School Act, and,
> **Whereas** it is doubtful if the act of marriage would be sufficient grounds upon which the Board could seek to cancel the contracts, and,
> **Whereas** this Board is of the opinion that it is in the best interests of family life and the community in general that a married woman teacher should not continue to hold a permanent appointment, terminable only at her own pleasure,
> **Therefore, Be it Resolved** that the Minister of Education be requested to so amend the Alberta School Act to provide that any School Board may terminate, upon marriage, the contract of any woman teacher who marries while holding a continuous contract with the Board,
> **And Further** that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Alberta School Trustees' Association for consideration at the Annual Convention to be held in Calgary in

November 1943.[141]

This resolution was supported by six of the seven trustees on the Edmonton School Board. It is interesting to note that the one woman member of the Board, who was funded as a candidate by the Local Council of Women, was of the number supporting the resolution. It was a male member who cast the single dissenting vote.[142] Edmonton club members had anticipated that women's presence on school boards would have protected the position of female teachers, yet in this particular instance their trust proved to have been misplaced.

The Edmonton School Board's resolution had been provoked by three women teachers on staff who had been married over the summer months and who were insisting on their legal rights to continue teaching in the fall. The Women's University Club of Edmonton immediately came to their defence. Dr. Mary Winspear, as spokesperson for the Club, wrote to the Alberta School Trustees' Association protesting the Edmonton Board's intention to terminate the married teachers' contracts. The opinion of the Club was that "termination of a contract should be upon grounds of qualification, competence and efficiency and that marital or non-marital status is irrelevant unless it effects one of these."[143] The Alberta Teachers' Association, thankful for the University Club's actions, gave its assurance that the established policy of the ATA since its inception was "to react as unfavorably as possible to any discrimination against women with respect to either salary or marital status."[144]

Dr. Winspear also communicated the University Club's disapproval to the Hon. Solon Low, Minister of Education. She was particularly incensed at the remarks made by School Board candidates running for re-election. The candidates felt that it would be unfair for married women to teach because it would mean two salaries going into one home. Dr. Winspear's rebuttal was that the argument would be valid only if there were legislation regulating the maximum income that could go into a home. The candidates suggested that neglected children and juvenile delinquency would result when mothers worked outside the home. Dr. Winspear responded that "apart from the question as to whether this is a matter that properly concerns the trustees is the fact that marriage, not child birth is the condition upon which it is proposed to cancel the contracts."[145] She went on to argue that married women, even those with children, should be encouraged to teach because they would be more mature, more empathetic towards children, and they would have roots in the community. She closed with the wish that the post-war period would witness "a society conscious of the rights of its individual citizens."[146] The Minister answered that he was surprised at the number of trustees who favored the proposed amendment to the School Act, but that, in his words, "I have not by any means signified my willingness to sponsor any such amendment."[147] Thus ended this discriminatory practice against female schoolteachers, which had been allowed to proceed, unchecked, throughout the inter-war period.

Clearly, then, Edmonton club women were the staunch allies of the teaching profession, particularly its female components. Club members advocated measures which would elevate the status and recognition of teachers such as adequate salary schedules and more rigorous training requirements. They participated in locating suitable positions for teachers, and they provided incentives, in the form of scholarships, to teachers who accepted difficult positions. But they were intolerant of discriminatory practices against female teachers, and whenever such practices were uncovered, the perpetrators met with the wrath of the Edmonton clubs. As women themselves, club members were particularly sensitive to the sorry plight of female schoolteachers. At the same time, they were motivated by a desire to ensure that when their children entered the province's educational system, they were taught by mature, well trained teachers who possessed an empathetic understanding of childhood.

Edmonton Club Women and Alberta Education

Edmonton club women showed visible interest in the formulation of a more child-centered perspective within the Alberta school system. They manifested their interest in several ways. First, they became directly involved in the schools. Club women made suggestions regarding curricula, they filed protests against that which they found objectionable, they served on lay committees for the revision of curricula, and they were charged with the responsibility of writing courses themselves. Through careful scrutiny of the reading materials available in the schools, club members were able to moderate children's exposure to American ideas, and if these ideas were at odds with the Canadian point of view, the members ensured that the offending materials were removed from the school curricula.

A second way in which the club members of Edmonton demonstrated their interest was by examining educational issues. Through their education committees and study groups, and their interactions with educationalists from abroad, club women delved into educational and vocational guidance, they studied child psychology, they familiarized themselves with the new testing and measurement techniques, they knew the latest educational methods, and they kept pace with developments in progressive theory. When the Departmental officials undertook to revise the school curricula, many of the ideas which they advocated were ones already familiar to the Edmonton club members.

Finally, the Edmonton club women's relationship with teachers signified a broader interest in education and schooling. By advocating better pay and more stringent training requirements, by locating employment opportunities and providing incentives to those who accepted the more challenging positions, and by calling attention to examples of discrimination against female teachers, club members revealed themselves to be allies of the profession. The progressive ideas and techniques of the new school programs placed significant demands on teachers. Club women's efforts were aimed at ensuring that these teachers were of a high calibre.

Club women, generally, were interested in new and better ways to educate their children, and with the Depression experiences of unemployment and hardship before them, they were particularly anxious that their children's schooling was modified so as to equip them with the skills necessary to succeed in a rapidly changing civilization. Each of the groups represented in this study exhibited some activity in the areas of education and schooling. The Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton had speakers address its huge membership on current educational concepts and trends, while the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club did the same thing for its more modest gatherings. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, together with its primaries, was extremely involved in aiding rural schools, in presenting awards and scholarships to both children and teachers, and in examining textbooks for Canadian content. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League pursued similar ventures, at least with respect to presenting awards and dispensing aid, but its undertakings were intended to benefit Catholic children and teachers within the separate school system. The Edmonton Home Economics Association tended to confine its interest to the furtherance of home economics in the schools. It was the Women's University Club that was the self-professed leader of women's organizations in educational matters. The Club's status was understandable in that it had been established for the expressed purpose of promoting educational interests, and all its members held degrees. Therefore, this organization was the most prominent in its examination of educational issues, and its interactions with teachers and the schools.

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[1] Records of the Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 11 December 1915 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 69.22).

[2] Ibid.

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[3] Ibid., Minutes of 11 December 1915, 12 February 1916, and 6 May 1916.

[4] Ibid., Minutes of 3 November 1921.

[5] Ibid., Copy of a letter to the Local Council of Women of Edmonton, 20 February 1922.

[6] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 7 March 1921.

[7] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 12 March 1932 and 4 April 1932.

[8] The Department of Education's "Questionnaire in Connection With Curriculum Review" posed the following questions:

1. What should we expect to accomplish through our schools?
2. It is often said that while the world has been rapidly changing the school has stood still and therefore is not meeting the needs of today. To what extent is this true, and what changes should be made in the school to meet these new conditions?
3. One of the problems of the school arises from the varying interests and capacities of the pupils. Is it possible by some modification of our courses to meet the needs of all more completely? Indicate the changes you would suggest.
4. The General Course has not been selected by pupils in any considerable numbers. Is it desirable that pupils who are not going on to higher education should take advantage of the wider choices of this course?
5. The Departmental examinations in the first year and in certain subjects of the second year have been eliminated. Was this a wise move? Should it be extended? How far?
6. What subjects, if any, should be dropped?
7. What subjects, if any, should be added?
8. Is too much time being spent on some subjects and too little on others? Specify.
9. What else would you suggest for the improvement of our schools?

(Source: AR 1934, p. 18).

[9] Women's University Club, Minutes of 22 May 1934 and 13 October 1934.

[10] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 27 January 1936 and 28 April 1936.

[11] Ibid., Minutes of 21 November 1938, 16 January 1939, 20 February 1939, and 24 April 1939.

[12] Ibid., Minutes of 31 October 1938.

[13] AR 1940, p. 18.

[14] Ibid., Minutes of 21 April 1923.

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[15] Records of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, Minutes of 8 March 1923 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 77.137).

[16] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 19 May 1923.

[17] Ibid., Minutes of 25 January 1932.

[18] Ibid., Minutes of April 1937.

[19] Ibid., Minutes of 24 April 1939.

[20] AR 1939, p. 13.

[21] AR 1940, p. 10.

[22] Edmonton Home Economics Association, unbound manuscript entitled "History of the Edmonton Home Economics Association," compiled by Edith Widden in 1967.

[23] Women's University Club, Report of the Convener of the Education Committee, 13 December 1924.

[24] Ibid., Minutes of 21 January 1922.

[25] Ibid., Copy of a letter to the Local Council of Women of Edmonton, 20 February 1922.

[26] Ibid., Minutes of 9 December 1922.

[27] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newpaper article of 26 February 1919.

[28] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 8 March 1923 and 12 April 1923.

[29] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 26 April 1924.

[30] Ibid., Minutes of 18 September 1924.

[31] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 1 November 1926.

[32] George S. Tomkins, A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1986), p. 157.

[33] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 12 November 1920.

[34] The Provincial Chapter passed the "Resolution on Loyalty" by a vote of 29 to 8. Source: Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 10 February 1921.

[35] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 14 April 1921.

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[36] The one notable exception to this general dislike for all things American was the Edmonton Home Economics Association. When the Association formed in 1923, it affiliated with the American Home Economics Association. After the formation of the Alberta Home Economics Association in 1935, and the Canadian Home Economics Association in 1939, the Edmonton Club distanced itself from the American Association. However, it still continued to pay the five dollar group affiliation fee to the American Association. Source: Edmonton Home Economics Association, "History of the Edmonton Home Economics Association."

[37] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 4 March 1920.

[38] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Correspondence dated 22 April 1920.

[39] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 9 September 1920.

[40] Ibid., Minutes of 15 January 1927.

[41] Records of the Department of Education, Correspondence from the Alberta Provincial Chapter of the IODE, 3 December 1936 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 79.334).

[42] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 14 February 1929 and Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report of the Education Committee 1928-29.

[43] Sheehan, "Education, the Society and the Curriculum in Alberta," pp. 39-40, 52.

[44] Ibid., p. 41.

[45] AR 1923, p. 31.

[46] Sheehan, "Education, the Society and the Curriculum in Alberta," pp. 41-42.

[47] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 14 December 1929 and 10 January 1931.

[48] AR 1933, p. 11.

[49] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 13 November 1939.

[50] Department of Education, Correspondence from the Alberta Provincial Chapter of the IODE, 26 October 1939 and File Copy of Correspondence from the Chief Inspector of Schools to Inspectors, 22 November 1939.

[51] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 4 November 1921.

[52] Ibid., Minutes of 29 February 1928.

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[53] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Copy of Correspondence to the Edmonton Local Council of Women, 20 February 1922.

[54] Records of the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League, Minutes of 1 December 1922 and 8 November 1932 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 75.576).

[55] Ibid., Minutes of 13 January 1931 and 11 October 1932.

[56] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 13 November 1919.

[57] Ibid., Minutes of 13 June 1929 and 10 October 1929.

[58] Ibid., Minutes of 11 May 1936.

[59] Ibid., Minutes of 14 September 1937.

[60] Ibid., Minutes of 11 April 1938.

[61] Ibid., Minutes of 8 May 1939.

[62] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 28 February 1921 and 13 June 1933.

[63] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 16 April 1921.

[64] Edmonton Home Economics Association, "History of the Edmonton Home Economics Association," and Minutes of 25 November 1940.

[65] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 11 August 1933.

[66] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 10 November 1921 and 8 December 1921.

[67] Ibid., Minutes of 9 February 1922 and 9 March 1922.

[68] Ibid., Minutes of 18 April 1929 and 9 May 1929.

[69] Ibid., Minutes of 29 November 1936.

[70] Ibid., Minutes of 26 August 1937.

[71] Department of Education, Copy of Correspondence from the Chief Inspector of Schools, 5 October 1940.

[72] David C. Jones, "Schools and Social Disintegration in the Alberta Dry Belt of the Twenties," in Schools in the West, pp. 265-266.

[73] Ibid., pp. 268-272.

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[75] Barbara Villy Cormack, Perennials and Politics: The Life Story of Hon. Irene Parlby, LL.D. (Sherwood Park, Alberta: Professional Printing Ltd., 1968), pp. 102-103.

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[79] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 13 December 1924.

[80] Ibid., Minutes of 13 May 1922 and 11 November 1922.

[81] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 29 September 1923 and 26 February 1934.

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[83] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 12 October 1929, 28 October 1929, and 29 September 1930.

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[87] AR 1939, p. 8.

[88] AR 1932, pp. 9-10.

[89] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 11 April 1931.

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[134] Ibid., Minutes of 30 October 1939 and 1 April 1940.

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[136] Ibid., Minutes of 15 April 1940.

[137] Ibid., Correspondence from John Barnett, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Alberta Teachers' Association, 28 October 1943.

[138] AR 1922, p. 13.

[139] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Correspondence from John Barnett, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Alberta Teachers' Association, 28 October 1943.

[140] Patterson, "Voices From the Past," pp. 103-105.

[141] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Copy of an Edmonton School Board resolution.

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[143] Ibid., Copy of Correspondence to A.G. Andrews, Secretary of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, 3 November 1943.

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CHAPTER IV

EDMONTON CLUB WOMEN'S VIEWS ON THE HEALTH OF YOUNG ALBERTANS

Education and schooling were not the only areas where the influence of women was evident and where new ideas about children and child rearing impacted upon public policy. Just as members of women's clubs voiced interest in children by focusing on schooling provisions, so too, did they attempt to ensure that the health of children would be upgraded and safeguarded through their advocacy and study.

Several historians have noted the intensity with which women in organizations pursued issues that related to the development of better health in children. Terry Morrison's study of child-centered social reform in Ontario in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, credited women with having pioneered the field of childhood health. A most striking example occurred in 1875, when a group of Toronto women founded Ontario's first Sick Children's Hospital. Unlike general hospitals, this institution was devoted to the specialized care of childhood diseases, and admittance was restricted to the children of the poor. When a new facility was built in 1892, the Ladies' Committee added a school of pediatric nursing, a free dispensary for pauper children, and a dental clinic. According to Morrison, women characteristically administered reform endeavors for children while men tended to participate through serving on the policy-making bodies, the Boards of Directors, of reform institutions.[1] Rosa Shaw's history of the National Council of Women of Canada attributed every advance in public health to the efforts of that organization. Near the close of the nineteenth century, the Council founded the Victorian Order of Nurses to remedy the need for medical and nursing aid in the sparsely populated regions of the Dominion. In the decade preceding the First World War, the Council built several hospitals and added wards to existing ones, it waged a successful campaign to reduce infant mortality, it worked for the prevention of tuberculosis, it initiated programs for purity in food, milk, and water, and it advocated medical inspections in schools with the effect that by 1913, it was able to report that such inspections were available in almost all large cities.[2]

In the United States women's organizations were among the liberal reform groups interested in the school health movement. According to William Reese's study of school reform during the progressive era, their efforts, combined with those of other groups such as Socialists, and the advocates of scientific management and business efficiency, initiated crusades which led to lunch and nutrition programs, medical and dental inspections, classes for anemic and tubercular children, and an emphasis upon sanitation and hygiene. However, Reese has underlined that there was more behind the American school health movement than the humane desire to improve children's lives. New immigrant populations and the urban poor motivated some to promote school health as a means to social efficiency and the perfection of a stronger race.[3] Just as in Canada, the medical inspection of American schoolchildren flourished after the turn of the century. It did so, however, amidst considerable opposition and some degree of civil disobedience. Parents were particularly opposed to any treatment of their children without their prior written permission.[4] Those who promoted medical inspection in the schools used several arguments in its support; it was "a way to eliminate 'backward' and 'dull' students, to ensure all children equal educational opportunities, to promote the vitality of the 'race,' and to make parents more responsible citizens."[5] This variation in the justification for medical inspections mirrored the entire school health movement. It was comprised of groups of individuals with sharply contrasting social goals. American club women were only one of the groups competing in the movement to ensure healthier children.

This connection between club women and the inception of the child health movement is one that historians have acknowledged. Morrison, Shaw, Reese, and others have demonstrated that women in Canadian and American organizations were active in the pioneering and advancement of child health in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The health-related concerns of Edmonton club women in the inter-war period were in many ways an extension of the issues which captured the attentions of health reformers and club members prior to and during the First World War. Neil Sutherland, in his study of the major reform efforts for Canadian children before 1920, saw the public health movement as having three distinct aspects. One was protecting and improving the health of school aged children, a second was the reduction of mortality among infants and the young, and a third was the attempt to come to terms with what was known as 'feeble-mindedness'.[6]

The initial phase in the campaign to improve the health of school aged children began in the 1880s, and was aimed at sanitation and the control of infectious and contagious diseases. Health officials attempted to enforce minimum sanitary standards for school buildings in terms of site, ventilation, heating, furniture, water, and sewage. If an infectious disease such as measles, mumps, whooping cough, diphtheria, or smallpox penetrated these sanitary barriers, then the infected children were excluded from school, or if the outbreak was substantial, the school was closed until the contagion declined.[7] Additionally, health officials attempted to ensure that teacher training institutions provided their recruits with a grounding in physiology, hygiene, and public health, and they worked toward the introduction of compulsory hygiene instruction in the schools. Here they met with some success when, in 1911, a prominent Winnipeg doctor wrote a new health text for Manitoba schools. The text eventually was adopted in Alberta.[8] This was the "sanitary phase" of the public health movement and it was initiated by provincial, state, and national agencies.[9]

School medical inspections formed a subsequent phase in the campaign to protect children's health, and it was municipal authorities in urban centres who led the way in this aspect of the movement. Canada's first regular medical inspections were initiated in Montreal in 1906, and in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Vancouver, and Hamilton in 1907. By 1914, school medical inspections were carried out in many Canadian urban centres: four cities had them in the Maritime provinces, three cities in Quebec, fourteen in Ontario, and five in British Columbia. Of the prairie provinces, there were six cities that inspected their school aged children: Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Calgary, and Edmonton.[10] Some cities had physicians conduct the inspections, but increasingly, the job fell to the school nurse. It was she who did the routine inspections, administered first aid, and visited the homes of children who had been excluded from school because of sickness.[11] The advent of school medical inspections represented a shift away from merely controlling diseases, which had been the goal of the sanitation efforts, to the actual prevention of diseases; it was a shift from "premises to pupils."[12]

The campaign to reduce mortality among infants and the very young has been defined by Sutherland as the second aspect of the public health movement in Canada. At the turn of the century, medical health officers did not recognize infant mortality as being a major challenge, although women's organizations, including the National Council of Women of Canada and the Women's Institutes, recognized the problem as early as the 1890s. It was a combination of large-scale immigration from southern Europe, together with the casualties of the First World War, that stimulated widespread alarm over mortality rates.[13] Dr. Helen MacMurchy and other health officials were able to synthesize worldwide information on infant mortality for the Canadian public. Their list of the causes of death among infants included:

> . . . poverty, ignorance, poor housing, overcrowded slums, low wages and other social conditions that forced mothers of young children to work outside their homes, impure water and milk, loose controls over the spread of communicable diseases, poor prenatal care, inadequate medical attendance at birth, tardy registration of births, and the lack of clinics and nursing services devoted to helping mothers care for their babies properly.[14]

Several methods were employed to tackle the problem of infant mortality. Milk depots were established, then well-baby clinics, and home visits by public health nurses were made available so that by the early 1920s, most cities and large towns in Canada had a system of clinics and home visits in operation.[15] Health reformers also attempted to provide prenatal care as a means of reducing both infant and maternal mortality, however, as late as 1921, when Edmonton's medical health officer conducted an investigation into the cause of each infant fatality in the city, he concluded that ninety-two of the one hundred and sixty-five deaths were attributable to the condition of the mother's health.[16] Just as in the case of school medical inspections, the campaign to reduce infant mortality was waged principally in urban centers.

The third aspect of the public health movement, according to Sutherland, was concerned with feeble-mindedness and the overall mental health of children. Local and provincial associations of mental hygienists began to form around 1910, and by 1918, they were represented nationally by the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene. The prevalent assumption of mental hygientists in this period was that feeble-mindedness was caused by hereditary, and not environmental factors. For this reason, they tended to center their emphases upon excluding and eliminating feeble-mindedness, rather than exploring the possibilities of treatments or cures.[17] They called upon the Canadian government to exclude the mentally defective as potential immigrants to the country, and the government responded by tightening its immigration legislation and procedures. They wanted the feeble-minded excluded from public schools, since it was believed that they impeded academic progress and posed a moral threat to 'normal' students. Many urban school boards responded by establishing separate classes for feeble-minded children. Mental hygienists perceived a relationship to exist between feeble-mindedness and juvenile delinquency. Lacking in inhibitions and the mentality to distinguish right from wrong, the feeble-minded were seen as posing a threat to the schools and society. The most effective solution to the elimination of the feeble-minded was to ensure that they not be allowed to reproduce. This sentiment was the one expressed most "strongly and consistently" by mental hygienists, and it brought results in two provinces. Both Alberta and British Columbia passed legislation which permitted the sterilization of mental defectives.[18] By the early 1920s, the mental hygienists had succeeded in attaining "a very central place in the whole child welfare movement."[19]

These three aspects of the public health movement, the protection of the health of schoolchildren, the campaign to reduce infant mortality, and the problem of the feeble-minded, had their genesis in the years prior to the First World War. Once initiated, the movement continued to gather momentum so that by the 1920s, many Canadians, especially women, were attempting to extend public health into every community in the country.[20] In Edmonton the members of women's organizations evinced their traditional interest in the health of children and of the community. Their efforts in the inter-war period were directed toward protecting both the physical and mental health of children.

The Message of the Health Professionals

Health professionals welcomed the opportunity to deliver their messages to women in organizations. In an era of rapid growth in the media industry, personal interaction through speeches, followed by question and answer periods, still was one of the preferred means of communicating health information. What physicians expected to do at club meetings was educate the memberships concerning health problems, and gain their aid in bringing about the medically approved solutions. These professionals routinely encouraged club women to take an active interest in health matters.

In an address to the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Dr. Margaret Patterson claimed that throughout the centuries, women's organizations traditionally had endeavored to alleviate suffering and protect children, with the result that provincial governments often turned to them for advice and help. Dr. Patterson isolated some of the major health areas where club women might direct their energies in the 1920s. Diseases such as tuberculosis and smallpox were one concern. An estimated fifteen million were killed in the First World War, and yet more than that number had died of tuberculosis, an unnecessary illness which could be cured through fresh air, sunshine, good food, and rest. Although smallpox was not claiming lives at that moment, a widespread carelessness and laxity in obtaining vaccinations was highly imprudent. She urged women to be "missionaries of health," and aid in putting an end to these diseases. Club women were encouraged to consider directing their influence toward the schools, where they would do well to encourage thorough medical inspections, and the addition of health as a compulsory subject on school curricula. They also were encouraged to agitate for better lighting and seating in schools, as a means to the prevention of "hollow chests," which caused tubercular trouble.[21]

Another important area for women's organizations to become involved was infant mortality which, to that point, had been treated less seriously than a "blight on wheat," even though statistically one in eight babies died before the age of one. Dr. Patterson suggested that club women investigate the death rate of babies and discover whether the health laws were adequate. They received prompting, as well, to urge the government to distribute its free health literature as widely as it distributed its other publications. She thought that children needed to develop both physical and moral backbone, and that club women could help to develop the latter if they stopped giving their babies pacifiers. In her words, "the first great mistake and destroyer of moral backbone was when a child cried, the mother immediately put a comfort in its mouth, making it that much harder to resist temptation when confronted."[22]

Dr. Patterson believed that it was within the capabilities of club women to solve health problems through a knowledge of their own locality and its needs. It was not necessary that they attempt to achieve "great things."[23] This underscores an important point in considering club women and reform. Often the efforts of club women were directed at bringing about small improvements in the lives and health of people. It was less common, though not unheard of, for them to be successful in bringing about major reforms. Yet it is the major, usually legislative reforms which receive the greatest attention from historians, and when these are lacking, it is suggested that the women's movement failed, or it disappeared altogether. A careful consideration of the many smaller, more modest exertions of club women reveals that they were active in child-centered reform, and that they worked diligently to bring about a better state for children's health.

A dentist's views on health were presented at a Women's Canadian Club tea in 1930. Dr. Harry S. Thomson, Field Secretary of the Oral Hygiene Council of Canada, had come to Edmonton in connection with an intensive oral hygiene campaign which was being carried on throughout the province at that time. An ardent proponent of preventive dentistry, he complimented the Alberta Department of Health for its emphasis upon "prevention rather than cure." This program placed the Alberta system "heads and shoulders ahead of any province in Canada."[24] The health risk associated with dental decay was not to be overestimated, it was one of the greatest causes of lowered physical resistance and lack of health. The problem seemed to affect Anglo-Saxons in particular, since ninety-seven per cent of them had decayed teeth, as compared to forty per cent of central Europeans, one out of every one hundred New

Zealand Maoris, and three out of every one hundred Eskimos. The solution was in prenatal and early childhood care, since the development of the first teeth took place before birth, and the enamel crown of the permanent teeth was completely formed by seven years of age. Proper care and diet for the pregnant mother, coupled with regular dental care for children in the first seven years of life, was "the secret of perfect teeth."[25]

Canada had the highest per capita expenditure on health education of any country in the entire world, but according to Dr. Thomson, until the government health service was strengthened at the federal level, it fell to voluntary organizations to deal with pressing health issues. Valuable work already had been carried out by the Oral Hygiene Council of Canada, the Red Cross Society, the International Mental Hygiene Council, the Child Welfare Association, and the Tuberculosis Association. With the support of women's organizations such as the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, it was possible to make gains in health education through voluntary effort.[26] Dr. Thomson's view of the need for greater federal involvement in health was one shared by the women's organizations of Edmonton. In 1932, the affiliated societies of the Edmonton Local Council of Women endorsed a resolution from the Women's Canadian Labour Council which favored the state control of medicine.[27]

Physicians covered numerous topics in their inter-war addresses to Edmonton women's organizations including "Nursing," "Canada and the Medical Profession," "Health Insurance," and "Progress in the Medical Field." This was one of the ways club women learned of the extent of health problems and the potential remedies which the medical profession endorsed. Additionally, health professionals recognized that women's organizations were a powerful vehicle for the dissemination of information, and a valuable source of voluntary effort. It served the interests of both parties to forge a mutual link. The major issues which Edmonton club women attempted to solve in the inter-war period concerned methods to enhance the physical health of children, ways to promote mental health, and the matter of women's health.

Healthy Bodies: Nutrition and School Medical Inspection

It was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that a connection was drawn between nutrition and learning. At that time, American educators, physicians, political activists, and ordinary citizens began to debate the possible relationships which might exist between nutritional development, scholastic achievement, and social policy. The idea of feeding undernourished children became quite a complex issue in the United States, one that invited competing ideas concerning "parental versus school responsibilities, socialist versus capitalist perspectives on the social order, and the rights of the child and the state."[28] Efficiency reformers and activist physicians, for example, based their support for school meals upon elitist fears of race deterioration and its impact upon national development. Children represented the future manpower for the work force; their potential contributions would be less if they were malnourished and disease-ridden. Studies which underlined the importance of childhood nutrition in educational attainment proliferated near the turn of the century as individuals came to conclude that "starving children made poor scholars."[29] It was most notably through the efforts of American women's organizations and other groups that school meal programs were introduced. By the First World War approximately one hundred cities across the United States had such programs. However, for the most part, these programs were unsuccessful in reaching the majority of children, including the poor who might have benefited the most from them.[30]

This idea of there being a relationship between proper nutrition and the ability to learn well was familiar to Canadians living in the inter-war period. Like their American counterparts, it was women in organizations who addressed the issue of providing nutritious meals to schoolchildren. In Alberta, that concern was directed primarily toward children living in rural areas. Even urban women's organizations, who might understandably have attempted to introduce meal programs into city schools, sought instead to act on behalf of rural children. One of the first actions of the Edmonton Home Economics Association after it formed in 1923, was to call for hot lunch programs in rural schools. The Association passed a motion recommending that the Women's Institutes of Alberta "urge upon the Department of Education the taking of steps towards making the serving of hot lunches in rural schools part of the school routine and make it the duty of the teacher employed to supervise this part of the work."[31] Unfortunately, 1923 was not a propitious time to recommend new, and potentially expensive programs to any department within the provincial government. In that year, the mounting effects of the agricultural depression caused the United Farmers of Alberta administration to institute drastic reductions in government services, and the Department of Education was not exempted from these cuts. The number of school inspectors was reduced from forty to twenty-five, the Edmonton Normal School was closed, and the usual assistance to boards of trustees in financing their schools was curtailed.[32] Fortunately, it was not the custom of women in organizations to rely upon government initiative to solve problems, this was a rôle that they traditionally reserved for themselves. The issue of providing school meals was no exception. Throughout the entire inter-war period, individual Women's Institutes served hot lunches at rural schools on a daily basis.[33]

Club women's interest in childhood nutrition surfaced most visibly in times of economic recession. It was during the recession of the early 1920s that the Nutrition Committee of the Edmonton Home Economics Association decided to dedicate a year to the study of the most recent advances in the nutrition of children. This work was directed by one of the members employed on the Public Health nursing staff. At the end of the study, the committee shared its findings with the general Association membership.[34] On a lesser scale, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic

Women's League heard an address entitled "Health Building for Children," in 1923.[35] In the same year, at a meeting of the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, a speaker addressed the theme of a balanced diet in its relationship to the formation of teeth in children. Members learned of the importance of calcium to the fetus; inadequate calcium intake by the mother would cause "the developing fetus to actually draw upon the teeth of the mother, hence the tooth trouble prevalent at such times."[36] Edmonton club women also were active in coping with the problem of feeding poor families. It was the Catholic Women's League which dedicated the greatest portion of its time to feeding the city's poor, but in 1921, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE aided in the distribution of poultry and meat among the impoverished of Edmonton.[37]

The extended years of hardship during the Great Depression saw a resurfacing of the Edmonton club women's interest in the nutritional requirements of the young. For example, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League heard a talk on "Low Cost Diets" in 1933.[38] Owing to its professional commitment, the Edmonton Home Economics Association exhibited the most intensive interest in nutrition. In 1935, the Association began experimental work with underweight students at the Edmonton Technical School. They attempted to better the physical conditions of these students by supplying them with milk twice each day and monitoring the improvements.[39] The following summer they participated in a Nutrition Clinic where they worked on special diets for diabetics, and did prenatal and postnatal work with mothers. The Association reported that an estimated ninety per cent of the province was currently deficient in calcium and exhibited a corresponding lowered resistance to disease and impaired growth. The consensus was that the last few years had added seriously to the physical deficiencies of the population and that the possibilities for work in this area were unlimited.[40]

The Association, together with other Edmonton women's organizations, also was committed to protecting the quality of foods. In 1934, they supported a bill before the federal House of Commons which sought to rid the market of inferior cheeses by limiting their water content, and they investigated the provincial Department of Public Health's responsibility in the matter of meat inspection in rural communities.[41] The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE investigated the issue of milk wastage in the province in 1936. In a written response from the Public Utilities Board, the Chapter learned that contrary to its impression, there was no surplus milk in the city, that in fact, the available amounts were insufficient to supply the relief camps and that the dairies took turns in donating milk to them. It was not possible to use milk from privately owned cows if it had not been certified for sale; in short, the entire matter resolved itself into "a question of health."[42]

Club women's concern for the nutritional requirements of children and their families was manifested in many ways. They called for the serving of hot lunches to rural children, they studied advances in childhood nutrition, they helped to distribute food to poor families, and they questioned the quality of foods available, the regulations for inspection, and whether there was any food wastage. Club women's anxiety over this matter was greatest during periods of economic recession when many families experienced difficulties in providing adequate food for their young. Members recognized that hunger was not the sole issue, inadequate nutrition brought on by dietary deficiencies had far-reaching effects for children. It impaired their future growth and lowered their resistance to disease. Grouped together in the close proximity of classrooms, their physical health was thus placed at great risk.

Apart from nutrition, club women looked to additional ways to protect the physical health of children. In this they were joined by Alberta's Provincial Board of Health and the Department of Education. In early 1918, before the end of the First World War, J.T. Ross, Deputy Minister of Education, reported on changes in the school law which would affect health services in schools. Boards of town school districts were now required to provide medical inspections at least once each year.

Additionally, these boards were authorized to supply medical, dental, and surgical treatment for students.[43] By 1919, these enactments still were in the process of being implemented. The Provincial Board of Health intended that children in all schools be regularly inspected by public health nurses or physicians, and that these health professionals deliver addresses concerning public health problems in all districts where schools were inspected. The Department of Education was to bear a portion of the costs of medical inspections, together with individual school districts which were required to contribute twenty dollars each annually.[44]

School medical inspections were expected to detect and prevent the spread of communicable diseases including measles, scarlet fever, whooping cough, diphtheria, and tuberculosis. Health officials inspected childrens' teeth, eyes, noses, and throats. They gave lessons in mouth hygiene and the proper techniques of cleansing the teeth. Children were encouraged to pass these sanitary lessons on to other family members so that, in effect, the information would reach two or three generations at one time. Health officials also looked for physical defects in children, which they then reported to parents. It was believed that the early correction of physical defects would promote school progress for the individual child, and for the entire class, which may have been held back because of the "handicapped laggard."[45]

The physician or, more commonly, the public health nurse who inspected the schools was responsible for visiting the parents of any child who required treatment. In this way, public health officials gained direct access to children's homes. Once inside, the public health nurse attempted to educate the mothers as to the dangers of contact infection in diseases among children, she took note of the conditions of sanitation within the house, and she was able to observe the child's siblings. It was not unknown for public health nurses to meet with "ignorance, prejudice, and opposition," from parents who "misjudge[d] her purpose."[46] However, the law was behind her insofar as parents could be legally compelled to provide "proper" treatment for their children.[47]

By the inter-war period, school medical inspections were underway in the province. This process opened the opportunity for various groups to amass statistical data on schoolchildren. The Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene was permitted to conduct a survey in Alberta schools in 1921.[48] The Medical Inspector of Schools carried out a comprehensive survey in 1922 which examined children for eye, nose, throat, teeth, and ear defects as well as nervous disturbances, heart problems, chest and spine deformities, flat feet, stooped shoulders, skin diseases, genital defects, and a host of other conditions. In all, a total of two thousand nine hundred and eighty-six students were given complete physical examinations; one thousand nine hundred and sixty of these were found to have one defect or another.[49]

Edmonton club women were highly supportive of this trend toward routine physical examinations of schoolchildren. As early as 1913, the Women's University Club of Edmonton hosted a speaker who defined the school's role as encompassing the mental, moral, and physical development of children. The latter responsibility was to be fulfilled through medical examinations to test hearing and sight.[50] By the inter-war period they still were asking that specific examinations be conducted. In 1931, the University Club joined the Local Council of Women in recommending that the Edmonton Public School Board test its students' eyesight and, if the numbers warranted, the Board should follow the Calgary example in establishing special classes for those with defective vision.[51] Club women even provided their voluntary assistance in managing examinations. In 1930, when the Oral Hygiene Council of Canada was conducting its provincial "Dental Clinic School Survey," and had come to Edmonton, it appealed to the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE for assistance from members in chart recording for dentists during the examinations of children.

Some fifty assistants were required for a full two days of dental examinations, and the IODE willingly complied.[52]

Club women did express some interest in physically handicapped children. In the mid-1920s, the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton invited Sir Henry Gauvin, Medical Superintendent of the Lord Mayor Trelvar Cripples' Hospital, to speak to the membership on the work done with crippled children in London, England.[53] During the same period the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League joined with the Junior Red Cross in holding a "Fete" at Government House to raise funds toward helping sick and crippled children in the Edmonton district.[54] Other women's organizations expressed their concern by attempting to ensure that such children were provided with an education. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, together with its primaries, paid for a crippled boy's college education in 1921.[55] Members of the Women's University Club went into the University Hospital in Edmonton to tutor and entertain the young sick and crippled patients. Generally, club women's concern for physical health centered upon the protection and enhancement of healthy bodies. Children who were handicapped from birth, or through disease or accident, normally were singled out only insofar as members were able to offer them special aids or comforts. This may, in part, be attributed to the circumstance that once medical inspections were underway in schools, great numbers of children were deemed to have had one "deformity" or another. Children were not expected to be perfect physical specimens and, more importantly, the physical handicaps that they had were not perceived to pose a threat to the community. Attitudes toward the mentally handicapped were less tolerant.

The inter-war campaign to preserve and protect the health of children received tremendous support from women in organizations. Their own efforts were aimed at informing themselves of the nutritional needs of children so that they could better protect the health of their own offspring. They made mass medical and dental inspections of children possible by donating their own unpaid, voluntary assistance. In times of economic necessity, club women distributed food to families who might otherwise have gone without. Equally important, club women provided a forum for health professionals to deliver their messages, and in this sense organizations were a vehicle for the dissemination of the ideas of the health movement. Club women supported health professionals in the view that full mental development in schoolchildren could not be expected to occur unless it was accompanied by healthful physical growth.[56] Progressive education's emphasis on the "whole child," which became a popular concept in Alberta's schools in the1930s, reflected the Department of Education's alignment with the views of the health movement.

Whether or not these views could be translated into practice was another matter. While revisions to the School Act in 1918 required town school districts to provide regular medical inspections of their students, there is good reason to question the extent to which this service was available in the province, even after a twenty year interim. Rural schools, in particular, appear not to have benefited fully. The move in the latter 1930s, to large units of administration was designed, among other things, to place services, such as school medical inspections, within reach of rural children. The process proved to be a slow one since in 1939, only "a few" divisions were reported to have introduced medical inspections.[57] As late as 1942, the Department of Education was being urged to ensure "that the health and nutrition of all school children be checked up by school doctors and nurses; and that medical and dental inspection be carried on throughout the high school, with special care in the examination for tuberculosis."[58] If the services of health professionals were unavailable, it fell to the classroom teacher to inspect her students. The Department's 1936 curriculum guide for the new elementary program outlined the specifics of the health examination, including what the teacher was to look for and why.[59] The Department was committed to the concept of school medical inspections, but the practical application of the idea caused considerable difficulty.

Healthy Minds: The Problem of the Feeble-Minded

Feeble-mindedness and a concern for the overall mental health of children were significant aspects of the whole child welfare movement that developed in Canada prior to 1920. They continued to occupy the attentions of various groups, including the Edmonton women's organizations, throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Feeble-mindedness was associated with a host of societal ills such as alcoholism, prostitution, pauperism, illegitimacy, juvenile delinquency, and crime.[60] These problems, together with immigration, a steadily declining birth rate, and the heavy toll on lives in World War I, stirred anxieties concerning the future of the Anglo-Saxon race. If the feeble-minded were left unchecked, then the race might well breed to its "lowest common denominator," and this possibility was simply "too frightening to ignore."[61]

Mentally defective girls and women were believed to pose the worst threat. Their indiscriminate promiscuity was offensive in itself, but their behavior was all the more alarming once it was scientifically "proven" that sixty per cent of their offspring would inherit their defect; this as compared to only twenty-five per cent of the progeny of feeble-minded males.[62] The idea that feeble-mindedness was genetically transmitted, that heredity and not environment was the determining factor, led many to support institutionalization as the most "humane" solution to the problem. From 1897 onward, the National Council of Women supported custodial care for feeble-minded females between the ages of fourteen and forty, the peak childbearing years.[63] Similarly, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, Inspector of the Feeble-Minded for the Ontario government between 1906 and 1916, was a vocal proponent of institutionalization. In *The Almosts: A Study of the Feeble-Minded*, she suggested that mental defectives were "exceedingly and unselfishly affectionate," that they displayed a "touching and childlike submission to and delight in the kindness of those older or wiser than themselves."[64] The exceptions were those defectives who had been neglected or allowed to acquire criminal or immoral habits, for once they had developed a taste for "evil things," it was exceedingly difficult to restore their former childlike simplicity and innocence. If mental defectives were placed in institutions where they could be "cared for and sheltered from childhood up," the problem could be nicely circumvented.[65]

MacMurchy supported her thesis with examples of "famous fools" in English literature. Her study illustrates an important observation regarding the writings of mental hygienists. While the rest of the public health movement used "factual argumentation" to make its points, the mental hygienists resorted to "florid rhetoric," and more often than not, both their writings and utterances were "alarmist" and "hysterical in tone."[66] Even so, they managed to win a number of supporters in Alberta. As early as 1914, the Edmonton Local Council of Women petitioned the Legislature to provide homes for mentally defective children in the province.[67] They were joined in the same year by the Department of Neglected Children when it too requested an adequate institutional facility for Alberta. The Department's concern was rather urgent because its temporary Children's Shelters were housing mentally deficient children and there was great difficulty in finding people to adopt them. Further, the Department had received requests for assistance from the parents of mentally defective children, but without an institution there was little that could be done.[68]

Representatives from the Provincial Council of Women, together with the Edmonton and Lethbridge Local Councils, interviewed the Minister of Agriculture, since the Board of Health was under his jurisdiction, and the Minister of Education in an attempt to obtain statistical information on the numbers of mentally defective children in the province. The Minister of Agriculture agreed to request physicians and other medical practitioners to report their mentally deficient patients, and the Minister of Education, agreed to have school boards furnish statements on the numbers of mentally defective children in the schools. Actually, a partial survey of the schools already had been made in 1917, and the government of Alberta had intended to join with the governments of Saskatchewan and Manitoba in establishing an inter-provincial institution for the care of the mentally deficient. However, these plans were abandoned once it was realized that the total number of feeble-minded in the three provinces who would be eligible for institutional care was two thousand three hundred; too many for a single facility. Separate provisions in each province would have to be made.[69]

Alberta's first Home for Mentally Deficient Children was established in 1918 under the auspices of the Department of Education. The original Home was located in a building formerly owned by the YWCA in Edmonton, and the Department leased additional lots for a playground and garden. In its first year, sixteen children were enrolled, in the next year there were thirty-five. The Department considered this to be a temporary facility. In 1920, a site for a permanent home was purchased consisting of one thousand acres along the Saskatchewan River, approximately ten miles east of Edmonton. Construction was to begin the following year, but plans were forestalled owing to the economic recession.[70] Henceforward, feeble-minded children were enrolled at the Department of Public Health's institutional facility located in Red Deer, Alberta. Apart from this institution, training facilities for the mentally retarded did not get underway in the province until the 1950s, with the establishment of the Winnifred Stewart School in Edmonton and the Christine Meikle School in Calgary.[71]

Historians have noted a shift in the perspective of mental hygienists in the 1920s. Originally, the majority seemed to have adhered to the "eugenic faith," believing that feeble-mindedness was genetically transmitted. Later an opposing school of thought, labelled "environmentalism," gained ascendancy. According to this theory, modifications in the environment would produce physical and mental changes in individuals which could then be transmitted to the next generation.[72] Both of these theories had "attractive" qualities which appealed to different groups. Those who believed in eugenics, such as Dr. Helen MacMurchy, found that "the formulation of scientific laws of heredity with the promise of predictability coincided with the search for order in the midst of turbulent change accompanying urbanization, industrialization and massive immigration."[73] Certain members of women's organizations, most notably the female suffragists, sided with environmentalism in the heredity-environment debate because "environmentalism provided much greater scope for women to contribute actively to the creation of the new race, while eugenics rendered the maternal function to a mere biological capacity."[74]

It was the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene which demonstrated most dramatically the shift in the mental hygienists' point of view. When the CNCMH formed in 1918, it placed an extreme emphasis upon hereditary factors and it, therefore, advocated the elimination of the feeble-minded through institutionalization and sterilization. However, in the 1920s, it turned to the possibilities of treating and curing mental illness, as well as to scientific investigations into normal human conduct.[75] In an address to the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton in 1923, Dr. Hincks, secretary of the CNCMH, told the membership that his organization was not trying to "work from the ground up," but rather, "to get underneath the ground, at the root of the trouble."[76] The CNCMH was attempting to discover why it was that people fell by the wayside socially, and what sort of people were likely to become a menace to the community. Some connections already had been made. It was known, for instance, that twenty per cent of criminal offenders were feeble-minded, and there also was a "close connection" between feeble-mindedness and illegitimacy. The Committee intended to establish clinics in every large city in the Dominion in order to better study the problem. Dr. Hincks warned the Canadian Club members that they likely were not even aware of the extent of feeble-mindedness because of the trend of moving mental institutions outside city centers. He went on to illuminate them by indicating that there were more patients in asylum beds than hospital beds, and more patients in insane asylums than students in Canadian universities. The present needs were to raise the levels of competency among mental hospital nurses, to provide manual occupations for patients and find markets for their productions, and to improve the methods of entry into mental institutions since most patients entered by way of jails and police courts. Echoing the new shift in the perspective of the mental hygiene movement, Dr. Hincks ended by emphasizing the need for early diagnosis and treatment so that patients might be aided in *recovering* from their mental illnesses.[77]

Yet evidence from the Women's University Club of Edmonton suggests that eugenic theories had not been laid to rest in the 1920s. In a report presented on behalf of the Education Committee in 1924, the convener lamented the growing preponderance of "unfit" in the professions and in high school classrooms. She defined the unfit in rather broad terms, as "the lazy, the dull, the unduly troublesome, the subnormal, etc.," and she urged that serious consideration be given to "the elimination of the unfit."[78] The idea that "the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak," while "lofty and magnanimous," would result ultimately "in the annihilation of the strong."[79] The convener's chief criticism was the excessive amount of time that unfit individuals spent in high school. "Fit" children stayed in the secondary education system for three or four years, and then they moved on to university or normal school, or they found jobs and became self-supporting, whereas the unfit remained for five or six years, and at the end of that time it was "too often apparent" that the money expended on their education had been wasted. She suggested that the Education Committee investigate the actual proportion of unfit students in the high schools and examine whether any remedy was possible. Her hope was that with the progressive improvements in mental tests and the increased application of educational and vocational guidance, it would be possible to apply a "selective method" to high school entrance. It was particularly important, "in an age of reconstruction," that exceptional students not be "sacrificed" for the sake of the unfit, the future of the race depended upon it. The convener's adherence to the eugenic theory of "nature" over "nurture" was demonstrated most clearly in her closing remarks: "Civilization has risen in accordance with the law of nature-the survival and dominance of the fittest. If we interfere with the operation of that law our civilization will decline for history knows no reprieve and nature never forgives."[80]

Another interesting perspective on the problem of the mental defective was provided by Irene Parlby, the prominent Minister Without Portfolio in the United Farmers of Alberta administration. Parlby had led the United Farm Women of Alberta for several years prior to her career as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and in 1924, she attended a UFWA convention to give an address on "Mental Deficiency." According to Parlby, neither the medical profession nor government could do much in the way of controlling mental illness until the public shed its indifference and became concerned about the future of the race. The task before community leaders was to follow the example of those within the mental hygiene movement, which was to endeavor to raise public awareness through education. In this way citizens would learn of the relationships which were thought to exist between feeble-mindedness and drunkenness, criminality, pauperism, prostitution, and illegitimacy. They would learn that feeble-minded women were "almost invariably" immoral, carried venereal diseases, and gave birth to defective children, and that the majority of parents who were prosecuted for cruelty to children were mentally defective. But most importantly, the public would be made aware of the highly hereditary nature of feeble-mindedness. Drawing from examples of famous mentally deficient families including the Kallikak's, the Nam family, and the Hill folk, Parlby illustrated the hereditary tendencies of feeble-mindedness and its close relationship with other social problems.[81]

She outlined the three grades of mental defectives for the assembled UFWA audience, pointing out that the lowest grade, the idiots, were institutionalized in most countries not because they were dangerous or capable of reproducing their kind, but because they required continuous care. The next grade of mental defective, the imbeciles, also posed no particular threat because they were easily recognized and mental arrest took place at an early age. It was the morons, the highest grade of mental defective, that were "really dangerous" to society. Morons were difficult to recognize and their mental arrest came relatively late in life. They were irresponsible, lacked good judgement, were unable to adjust to environments, and were easily influenced for good or evil. It was this latter characteristic which explained why morons could not be allowed to "remain at large." Even if they had led harmless lives, there was always the possibility that unprincipled individuals within the community would devise to "use them for their own evil ends."[82]

Parlby's research had uncovered three possible remedies which mental hygienists thought might control the problem of mental defectives. The first was the regulation of marriage, or more specifically, its prevention in the case of mental defectives. Parlby felt that there was little hope of such a law proving effective "so long as sentiment outweighs common sense, so long as the general public considers the individual as more important than the race."[83] The second potential remedy was the segregation of all mental defectives, but again, certain difficulties presented themselves. The public would have to be convinced that the feeble-minded would be happier and better cared for in institutions, and the parents of such children might well refuse to give them up. There also was an economic consideration; institutional care was enormously expensive. The third remedy was the sterilization of mental defectives and, while such a course would certainly prevent propagation, it would not solve the other social problems associated with the condition such as debauchery and disease. In short, it was "futile to think that these persons [could] be turned loose upon society, merely because they [had] been sterilized."[84]

As a rural club woman and an elected representative of the people, Irene Parlby's concerns with respect to the feeble-minded were essentially the same as those of Edmonton club women. Both believed that the feeble-minded posed a danger to society in terms of immorality, alcoholism, crime, and so forth. Based upon the medical opinions of the day, which said feeble-mindedness was hereditary and that the feeble-minded reproduced their kind at an alarming rate, both also feared for the future of the race. Parlby suggested that women make a practical contribution to the problem by training their own children "to a consciousness of the part they may play in the development of the human race," but there was general anxiety as to whether this course would be enough.[85] Even though it was controversial, Irene Parlby and Nellie McClung, another celebrated club woman and Member of the Legislative Assembly, each supported the sterilization of the mentally unfit.[86]

The issue of how best to deal with the problem of mental deficiency continued to gather momentum. In 1925, the Provincial Board of Health published a public health bulletin on the question "Is the sterilization of the mentally defective practicable as a preventive measure?" This particular bulletin was written by Dr. W.J. McAlister, Medical Superintendent of the Provincial Training School in Red Deer, Alberta. Dr. McAlister pointed out that the demands currently being made for "drastic remedial measures" to deal with mental deficiency were the result of widespread knowledge among the province's public of its adverse social and economic effects. Several countries and American states already had laws which permitted the "eugenical sterilization of the unfit," however, these places also had witnessed a significant expression of public sentiment against the practice. In order to circumvent such an outcry in Alberta, Dr. McAlister presented the findings of authorities in psychiatry, psychology, and eugenics so that the entire issue might be placed in a proper perspective at the outset. He then offered his own professional views on the subject, which were as follows:

> (1) That eugenical sterilization of the feeble-minded is desirable and practicable, but only so to a limited extent.
> (2) That it can only operate as one of many measures in prevention and control.
> (3) That education must precede legislation, if sterilization is ever

to become a real factor in the prevention of mental defect[s].
(4) That segregation of selected cases must still be the guiding principle in any legislation that may be proposed.
(5) That there are too many factors entering into the problem to hope for complete eradication of feeble-mindedness by any one method, such as sterilization.[87]

As a representative of the medical community in Alberta, Dr. McAlister's concerns regarding mental defectives were in accord with the anxieties expressed by certain Edmonton women's organizations and politicians. All wanted, in the words of Dr. McAlister, "the eradication of a condition that stikes at the roots of society and racial advancement."[88]

By 1928, public sentiment had been mobilized to such an extent that the United Farmers of Alberta government determined it was practicable to introduce legislation. In that year the Sexual Sterilization Act was passed for the purpose of preventing procreation by mentally defective persons. The Act defined a mentally defective person as one "in whom there is a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind existing before the age of eighteen years, whether arising from inherent causes or induced by disease or injury."[89] The conditions under which such a person could be sterilized were spelled out fairly clearly. A Board, consisting of four members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, was responsible for the decision of whether or not to sterilize. This Board was comprised of four members, two of whom were to be medical practitioners, (one nominated by the Senate of the University of Alberta and one nominated by the College of Physicians), and the other two were to be non-medical persons.[90] When a mentally defective patient was about to be discharged from a mental hospital, the Medical Superintendent could recommend that the patient be examined "by or in the presence of" the Board, and similarly in 1937 the Act was extended so that medical practitioners of mental hygiene clinics could recommend that the Board examine patients who had been under treatment or observation.[91] If the Board was of the unanimous opinion that the mentally defective person's "power of procreation" would result in defective progeny, then the Board could recommend sexual sterilization and appoint a surgeon to perform the operation. All that was required was the consent of the "patient," provided the Board determined he or she was capable of giving consent, or the consent of a wife, husband, parent, or guardian.[92]

The first Board appointed in the province was comprised of Dr. Egerton Pope, an Edmonton physician, Dr. E.G. Mason, a Calgary physician, Dr. J.M. MacEachran of the University of Alberta, and Mrs. Jean Field, representing the United Farm Women of Alberta.[93] Thus, even though the province's club women may have harbored reservations concerning the sterilization of mental defectives, clearly these were not so great as to prevent them from active participation in the scheme. British Columbia was the only other province to pass legislation permitting the sterilization of mental defectives. This was done in 1933, and as in Alberta, the legislators had the support of women's organizations.[94]

Although legislation may have been lacking in other provinces, this was not to say that sterilization did not take place. Wendy Mitchinson's study of *"Gynecological Operations on Insane Women: London, Ontario, 1895-1901"* must surely raise suspicions. Near the close of the nineteenth century, Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke, Medical Superintendent of the London Asylum, and his head surgeon Dr. Hobbs, performed gynecological operations on over two hundred female patients, claiming that the surgery brought about both physical and mental recovery. Given the widespread belief of the time, that there was an intimate connection between a woman's reproductive system and her mind, the actions of the two physicians may not have been altogether unreasonable, were it not for the following information. The vast number of patients operated on were married, they were in their childbearing years, and they were recent admissions to the asylum, which meant that they had the best chances of mental recovery, since the longer a woman remained in the asylum, the less likely she was ever to recover. The telling point is this: in a least forty per cent of the operations, the woman's future ability to bear a child was seriously impaired.[95] This certainly points to the possibility that Drs. Bucke and Hobbs were engaged in a form of experimental sterilization of women exhibiting psychoses. Ramsay Cook, another historian of Bucke, judged that "even within the context of the limited medical and psychiatric knowledge of the time these experiments were crude and inhumane."[96]

Once provision had been made for the institutionalization of the feeble-minded at the Home for Mentally Defective Children, and the Sexual Sterilization Act had been set in place, attention turned to the broader aspects of mental hygiene. Speakers at Edmonton women's club meetings began to explore the relationship between environmental factors and mental hygiene, and they looked to the possibility of circumventing mental illness. Dr. William E. Blatz, an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto, and a staff member of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene, was involved in research into ways of preventing mental disorders in children. He, and others, contended that such disorders led to "retardation in school work, delinquency and other forms of mal-adjustment and in later life to insanity."[97] Dr. Blatz was scheduled to speak to the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton in 1929, on the topic of "Mental Hygiene of Childhood." His opening remark set the tone of his speech: "Whereas for centuries we have been born into families that expect us to obey we would ask that first parents must deserve our obedience."[98] In fact, Dr. Blatz believed that parental expectations for obedience were out-of-date, now it was discipline that had to be relied upon when raising children. As disciplinarians, parents became teachers and not policemen to their children. The method by which parents were to employ discipline was to have children take the consequences of their own actions, for "if the law of consequences was enforced in social behavior there would be few social delinquents."[99] When punishment was necessary, it was never to be corporeal since this caused resentment in the child and was not a deterrent to repetition of the offense. Rather, the only form of punishment a parent was to utilize was isolation, because it gave the child an opportunity for reflection and reason. In addition to his other duties, Dr. Blatz served as a consultant to the juvenile court of Toronto which reportedly dealt with three thousand children each year. He estimated that at least seventy-five per cent of these children would not have been there "if it were not for the kind of parents they had."[100] Incidentally, this example of "parent-blaming" was characteristic of hygenist thought in the 1920s as hygienists began to make "a direct causal connection between the parents' treatment of children and later personality maladjustment."[101]

By the mid-1930s, even Dr. Helen MacMurchy had modified her emphasis upon the hereditary nature of mental deficiency, and had turned to a consideration of the role of environmental factors in creating mental illness. Her address to the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton in 1935, revealed that she too viewed parents, and the home environment that they created, as the root cause of mental troubles. She contended that "many of the ills, both mental and physical, experienced in later life are directly traceable to hurts received in childhood, wrong treatment and inharmonious environment of the child, or neglect, which leaves scars which are ineradicable."[102] She then warned parents against selfish and careless methods of childrearing. Dr. C.A. Baragar, Director of Mental Health for Alberta, was present at Dr. MacMurchy's address. Her remarks moved him to conclude that "if the women of Canada are concerned with the preservation of mental health all is well for the future."[103]

Dr. Baragar himself was a guest speaker at a Women's Canadian Club tea two months later. In his address, he drew a distinction between mental disease and mental defect, stating that of the thirty-five thousand mental patients in Canada, six thousand six hundred were mentally defective. Alberta had five hundred and fifty such people who were either in institutions or awaiting care. According to Dr. Baragar, there still was no adequate treatment for mental deficiency anywhere in the world. The most potent method at hand was specialized schools such as the one in Red Deer. Even though this small institution "just touches the problem in Alberta," it was proceeding along the proper channels in providing mental, vocational, and character training for its patients.[104]

There has been limited research on the mental hygiene movement in Canada to date, but what information exists suggests that the Canadian movement was closely linked with that of the United States. Indeed, George Tomkins, in *A Common Countenance*, has suggested that "no professional movement in the two countries displayed a closer symbiotic relationship across the international boundary in terms of interaction among the principal figures, the common concerns they shared and the funding sources they tapped."[105] Groups in both countries targeted the schools as the places where children might receive the benefits of the mental hygienists' ideas. According to Sol Cohen's account in *"The Mental Hygiene Movement, The Development of Personality and the School: The Medicalization of American Education,"* members within the American National Committee for Mental Hygiene wished to have the schools assume the responsibility for children's personality development. In the 1920s, the NCMH focussed upon young school aged children and adolescents, in the 1930s, they emphasized the mental hygiene needs of high school youth. Their strategy was interesting in that they did not seek the usual legislative enactments or school board fiats, rather they attempted to disseminate a "mental hygiene consciousness" throughout the broader public, particularly amongst professionals and opinion leaders, who were then expected to "facilitate acceptance by parents, teachers, and the schools of the mental hygiene point of view."[106] The NCMH's "key strategic objective" in the 1930s was to cement ties with the Progressive Education Association, the most powerful professional opinion leader in that period. This strategy proved so successful that by the close of the decade, the mental hygiene point of view had been "firmly entrenched in PEA thinking; hygienist conceptions, rhetoric and vocabulary had become part of the linguistic currency of progressive education."[107]

The question then, for our purposes, is to what extent did the mental hygiene movement impact upon Canadian schools? George Tomkins concluded that before 1945, that impact was "uneven and indirect." A more positive view did begin to develop concerning the educability of the mentally and morally defective, and the movement may have hastened the secularization of moral education, "moving it away from the overt inculcation of traditional Christian moral values."[108] However, the movement's call for a broadening of educational goals to encompass more than intellectual training did not amount to much, in fact, "its impact on the formalistic curriculum of the typical classroom appears to have been almost nil."[109] Nor was the movement successful in alleviating punitive disciplinary measures in schools. The "chief overall effect" of the mental hygiene movement, as far as Tomkins could discern, was the medicalization of the language of educators. Henceforth, "medical metaphors such as symptom, diagnosis, remedial, treatment and similar terms came into use."[110] In short, the impact was not very different from that experienced by the American movement.

Finally, there is the question of the Edmonton club women's position regarding the feeble-minded. Generally, Edmonton club women appear to have supported the institutionalization and even the sterilization of mental defectives, although controversy surrounded both measures. At bottom, what the members of Edmonton women's organizations wanted was to protect their children, and society, from association with the feeble-minded. Placing their faith in the expert and professional wisdom of the day, club women accepted as factual the connections that were drawn between feeble-mindedness and crime, immoral behavior, and juvenile delinquency. The linking of feeble-mindedness to these various societal ills caused club women to support measures which would curtail opportunities for such individuals to come into contact with other children. This included the schools. Edmonton club women were concerned that the presence of feeble-minded children in classrooms would place other children's morals in jeopardy and disrupt their education by slowing the pace of the class and lowering the overall educational standards. For these reasons, they called for special classes for subnormal children. The idea was not specific to either the Edmonton women's organizations or to the inter-war period. Other cities had special classes for the mentally deficient; they were established in Toronto as early as 1910.[111] In 1917, the Women's University Club of Edmonton recommended to the Edmonton School Board that it resume the classes for backward children which it had initiated prior to the outbreak of the First World War, since "effort in this direction is so vitally necessary to the interests of the individual, the community and the nation."[112] Clearly the province was thinking in this direction when the Minister of Education indicated that he would consider organizing auxiliary classes for backward children in larger cities on an experimental basis.[113] The scheme gradually became established in the inter-war years to the extent that at its 1935 Summer School session, the Department of Education began offering special courses in mental testing, psychology, and manual arts to teachers of sub-normal children.[114] By 1939, the Women's University Club was able to report to its national federation that special classes for subnormal children were available in city centers.[115]

Women's Health

When Edmonton club women examined health related issues, more often than not it was some aspect of children's health that drew their attentions. However, in the early 1930s, they forced into the public arena a women's health issue which had for decades been confined to the private realm. It was the question of limiting family size, or birth control. There was good reason why this issue was not openly discussed. Section 207 of the 1900 Canadian Criminal Code, (and section 179c of the earlier, 1892 version), prohibited the distribution of birth control information and the sale of contraceptive devices.[116] Despite this, the size of Canadian families continued to shrink, making it apparent that some form of birth control was being practiced. Publicly accessible, educative material on the subject would have made matters much simpler and safer, and it would have ensured that the information was available to greater numbers of women. By the inter-war period, women were becoming increasingly irritated at the deliberate withholding of information that was so vital to their health and the quality of their lives.

Assuming that a woman was fortunate enough to find a physician who was willing to discuss family limitation, he would likely have advised that she use a natural means to prevent conception. There were several from which to choose. Simple continence was a possibility, and prolonged nursing was believed, incorrectly, to provide protection. She might be advised to restrict relations to the "safe" days of her cycle, which were mistakenly believed to fall at mid-month, the least safe time. Alternatively, there was the practice of coitus reservatus (intercourse without ejaculation), and coitus interruptus, which probably was the most common means of contraception. Condoms, douches, and vaginal suppositories were not considered respectable by physicians and, therefore, their use was not discussed.[117] When contraceptive measures failed, a woman could turn to means of inducement or miscarriage. Various home remedies were popular at the time. She might try drinking concoctions of ergot of rye, savin, cotton root, tansy, quinine, pennyroyal, rue, or black hellebore. If these did not work she could try a combination of bleedings, hot baths, strenuous exercises, and the consumption of large quantities of gin.[118] Commercial abortifacients also were available, and although it was illegal, they were commonly advertized in newspapers as products which would restore normal menstruation. As a last resort, she would turn again to the newspapers and engage the services of a physician who advertized a specialization in "sexual disorders."[119] Although it is impossible to determine the precise rate of abortion in Canada, historians of the subject estimate that it played "a major role in lowering the birth rate."[120]

Childbearing and childrearing had profound effects upon women's lives, these were not incidental experiences to be passed over lightly. Therefore, there were any number of individual reasons why women resorted to the use of birth control and abortion in order to limit the size of their families. Economic considerations may have motivated some. The amount of security, education, or even inheritance that parents could provide a child would depend upon the number of siblings he had. There also was the issue of a woman's personal liberty and autonomy, both of which would be affected by her choice to become a mother. To an even greater extent, women chose birth control because repeated childbearing posed considerable health risks to them; "torn cervixes, fistulae, [and] prolapsed uteri" were known to be widespread "female complaints."[121] More terrifying still was the possibility of death in childbirth. Dr. Helen MacMurchy, as head of the Child Welfare Division of the federal Department of Health, produced a report in 1926 which confirmed the extent of maternal mortality in Canada.[122] Usually, women bore their children at home, by 1926, only 17.8 per cent of Canadian births occurred in hospital and these were likely the "high risk" cases.[123] Even though maternal mortality rates dropped in the inter-war period, from 5.3 deaths per one thousand live births in 1924, to 4.3 in 1939, it is not surprising that women would want to limit the number of times they put their lives at risk through childbearing.[124]

The United Farm Women of Alberta decided to take the matter in hand. At a convention, held in January 1933 at the Palliser hotel in Calgary, the UFWA called for the annulment of that section of the criminal code which prevented physicians from providing information on birth control. Unanimous support was then extended to a resolution petitioning the provincial government "to establish medically supervised clinics to give to married women who desire it and for whose health and welfare it is deemed advisable, information on family limitation."[125] The UFWA's actions represented the outcome of an intensive study on birth control which the organization had conducted in the previous year. During that time the Edmonton Local Council of Women initiated its own actions in support of birth control clinics by sending a resolution to its affiliated societies. That deed sparked a furor within the organization. The most vehement protests came from the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League which threatened to withdraw its membership in the Local Council of Women if the resolution was passed.

The bickering became so intense that the Edmonton newspapers caught wind of it and the debate spilled into the public arena. An international perspective was brought to bear on the subject. It was reported, for example, that Holland had been the first country in the world to provide birth control information to its people in government sponsored clinics. A contrary view emanated from Vienna where a city councilman voiced his alarm at the drastic reduction in the birth rate of the Austrian capital, citing as a cause "the passionate propaganda conducted on the part of the socialists and free-thinkers in favor of birth restriction."[126] Similarly, France's falling birth rate was reported to have been "gravely preoccupying the nation."[127] A Scottish peer in Britain's House of Lords proposed that grounds for divorce be broadened to encompass birth control. His idea was that divorce might be granted if one party to a marriage "willfully and without reasonable cause has used a contraceptive or otherwise prevented the natural course of childbirth against the wish of the other party."[128] The amendment was rejected. As far as the religious community was concerned, both the Anglican Church and the United Church of Canada publicly declared themselves to be in favor of birth control.

At home, when Dr. L.C. Conn, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Alberta medical school, and a practicing physician in the city, presented an address to the Edmonton Local Council of Women, his views were reported in the newspapers. Dr. Conn was frank about his position on birth control: "That birth control is widely practiced is no secret in spite of what anyone says, and the sooner it is put under safe auspices, the better."[129] He believed that the justification for birth control in terms of family limitation was a one-sided view. Women suffering from diseases such as pulmonary tuberculosis or cancer, or those with chronic heart trouble, certainly required definite information on the subject. In his medical experience, women put forward physical reasons for wanting birth control information more often than economic ones. He noted that "in a man-made world, the subject which is of particular concern to women has only in the past few years been given any attention."[130] It had only been in recent years that a scientific study of the subject had been made, and to that point physicians really had no "definite medical information" to pass on to their female patients.

Similarly, when Dr. Mildred Folinsbee Newell of Edmonton addressed a UFWA convention, her views were reported in the news. She advanced three reasons why the medical profession advocated contraceptive education. First, the physical or mental condition of some women made them unfit to have children. Second, the physical and mental health of mothers and children depended upon a proper two year spacing between each birth. Third, without birth control education, women with unplanned pregnancies would seek abortions. Dr. R.B. Jenkins, a Calgary health officer, supplemented Dr. Newell's remarks with the economic justification for birth control, stating that financial anxieties caused women more illness "than anyone dreams."[131]

Judging from the newspaper accounts of the period, the public appeared to have been favorably disposed toward the concept of making birth control information available to married couples. The majority of women in organizations tended to mirror that sentiment. For example, when the Local Council of Women's resolution came before the Women's University Club of Edmonton, its members voted a resounding 'yes' to the proposal, so too did the Women's Canadian Labor Council of Edmonton.[132] Of course, there were dissenters among the Council's affiliated societies. The Central Woman's Christian Temperance Union decided upon a 'no' vote "until the whole question had been more thoroughly studied, and conflicting medical and other opinions become more reconciled."[133] It was the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League that waged the strongest campagin against the Council's proposal.

The Archbishop attended the League's November 1932 meeting to inform the membership that he did not wish them to be connected with the Local Council of Women if the latter endorsed the resolution for birth control clinics. He suggested that a committee be formed to marshal arguments against the proposed resolution. This committee presented the League's opposition to the Local Council of Women, which responded by scheduling a special meeting at which reports for and against the subject could be presented.[134] Over two hundred women attended the special Council meeting and, for the most part, the reports which they heard favored a birth control clinic in Edmonton. Marion Conroy, first vice-president of the Edmonton Senior Subdivision, vented her disgust with the proceedings in *The Edmonton Journal*. She stated:

> What amazed one most in the whole amazing proceedings was, first, the fluency and seeming sincerity with which a really startling number of half-truths were brought forward in support of birth control, and, secondly, the fact that not once during the proceedings was the morality of the subject under discussion brought into question, nor was man's responsibility to his Creator and Supreme Ruler so much as mentioned.[135]

The Local Council of Women passed the resolution at its annual meeting in January 1933, and the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League, one of the largest affiliated societies on Council, withdrew its membership.[136] In a statement prepared for the press, the League clarified its position on birth prevention by indicating that the only allowable method for Catholic couples was "voluntary continency by mutual consent and through habits of Christian discipline."[137]

The League also sent letters to the Premier and to every Member of the Legislative Assembly urging the recipients not to consider birth control clinics or any other measure that would further family limitation or contraception.[138] Yet, when a delegation from the Edmonton Local Council of Women appeared before Premier Brownlee to present a resolution in support of a clinic, the Premier "assured the delegates of his sympathy with the movement," as did the Minister of Health, George Hoadley.[139] According to the Premier, the problem rested with the federal health minister who was not in favor of the scheme, and there were "difficulties" concerning the criminal code.

Edmonton, and all of Alberta for that matter, never did get a birth control clinic. The only provinces to obtain such facilities were Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia.[140] This is not to say that women did not have access to birth control information.[141] Even though the club members' campaign was not a material success, their actions notified the medical community that most women were in favor of birth control, and it is likely that physicians began to respond by providing information and contraceptive devices. At the very least, club women waged a successful educational campaign; they managed to bring a subject that was once considered private, out into the open for public debate.

The inter-war period saw the rise of a new cadre of childhood experts, physicians, public health nurses, psychologists, social workers and educators who were eager to inform and offer advice to mothers. Conversely, these professionals were equally prepared to criticize and judge mothers' childrearing efforts. Women's redefined role within the family as consumers, household engineers, and the principal care-givers to children meant that increasingly, they were held accountable for the future successes and even more so, the failures, of their children. Individually, women may have felt intimidated by the responsibility, but collectively, banded together in organizational structures as Edmonton club women were, they formed a powerful force. Although women in the inter-war period were having fewer children than their own mothers did, they were expected to direct a more intensive and competent effort into the upbringing of each child. This was one of the many reasons why club women insisted upon control over when, and how often they would bear children. Additionally, clubs provided members with the power to turn their scrutiny upon all institutions outside the family which came into contact with their children. As mothers, club women were taking no chances with the lives of their sons and daughters.

The child health movement, in its inter-war phase, was concerned with the physical and mental health of young people. Edmonton women's organizations participated in several capacities. The Women's Canadian Club, for example, played an important role in popularizing the ideas of the health movement, while the Edmonton Home Economics Association focused upon children's nutritional requirements, especially in relation to learning capabilities. Feeble-mindedness was considered a distinct threat to society in that it was associated, in the public mind, with alcoholism, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, and other negative forces. The Edmonton women's organizations were among those who supported the institutionalization and sterilization of the unfit, as well as their isolation from other children in classrooms. Club women also were interested in what the mental hygienists had to say with respect to childrearing and personality disorders. Views developed within the child health movement gradually surfaced in the schools when, for example, the Department of Education began extending its system of school medical inspections. Additionally, the establishment of separate classes for the sub-normal, and summer school courses for teachers of these classes, reflected indirectly, the affects of the mental hygienists. By the latter 1930s, the Department had implemented new programs which emphasized the "whole and wholesome" development of children. In this too, the influence of the child health movement was apparent.

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[3] William J. Reese, Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grassroots Movements During the Progressive Era (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), pp. 209-211.

[4] Ibid., p. 230.

[5] Ibid., p. 225.

[6] Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, p. 39.

[7] Ibid., p. 41.

[8] Ibid., pp. 42, 53.

[9] Ibid., p. 46.

[10] Ibid., pp. 47-48.

[11] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

[12] Ibid., p. 49.

[13] Ibid., p. 57.

[14] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

[15] Ibid., p. 68.

[16] Ibid., p. 65.

[17] Ibid., p. 73.

[18] Ibid., pp. 73-76.

[19] Ibid., p. 76.

[20] Ibid., p. 87.

[21] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 21 May 1919.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., Newspaper article of 4 March 1930.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 12 November 1932.

[28] Reese, Power and the Promise of School Reform, p. 212.

[29] Ibid., pp. 216-217.

[30] Ibid., pp. 221-222.

[31] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 21 April 1923.

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[33] Shelley Bosetti, "The Rural Women's University: Women's Institutes in Alberta from 1909 to 1940" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1983), p. 152.

[34] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 19 May 1923 and 20 October 1923.

[35] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 10 December 1923.

[36] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 30 October 1923.

[37] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 8 December 1921.

[38] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 14 March 1933.

[39] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 27 March 1935.

[40] Ibid., Minutes of 27 January 1936.

[41] Ibid., Minutes of 29 January 1934 and 26 February 1934.

[42] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 13 January 1936.

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[44] Records of the Provincial Board of Health, "Alberta Health Bulletin," February 1919 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 85.454), pp. 1-2.

[45] Ibid., "Alberta Health Bulletin," March 1919, p. 5.

[46] Ibid., "Alberta Health Bulletin," February 1919, p. 9.

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[48] Department of Education, Correspondence from Dr. C.M. Hincks, Associate Medical Director and Secretary, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene to Hon. George Smith, Minister of Education, 31 May 1921.

[49] Department of Education, Report of the Medical Inspector of Schools, 1922.

[50] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 8 February 1913.

[51] Ibid., Minutes of 10 January 1931.

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[53] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 10 September 1926.

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[55] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 10 November 1921 and 8 December 1921.

[56] Provincial Board of Health, "Alberta Health Bulletin," March 1919, p. 5.

[57] Dr. M.E. Lazerte, "Then and Now in Education in Alberta" School Progress (November 1939), (Project Yesteryear).

[58] Revision of the High School Programme Dec. 1942, p. 8.

[59] Programme of Studies for the Elementary School 1936, pp. 149-150.

[60] Veronica Jane Strong-Boag, "The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929," National Museum of Man Mercury Series, paper no. 18 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1976), pp. 318, 372.

[61] Bacchi, Liberation Deferred?, p. 108.

[62] Rebecca Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children, 1909-1929: A Case Study in Child Saving" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1977), p. 79.

[63] In 1915, a delegation comprised of Council women from several provinces presented the Prime Minister with a petition requesting a Royal Commission to delve into the

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question of the feeble-minded throughout the entire Dominion. Source: Shaw, Proud Heritage, pp. 60, 63.

[64] Helen MacMurchy, The Almosts: A Study of the Feeble-Minded (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), p. 22.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, p. 72.

[67] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 10 January 1914 and 10 October 1914.

[68] Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children," p. 79.

[69] Shaw, Proud Heritage, p. 64.

[70] AR 1920, pp. 12-13 and Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province, p. 53.

[71] In 1963, the Department of Public Health's Provincial Training School at Red Deer was accepting all categories of mentally defective children, from the lowest level custodial cases up to those on the borderline of normalcy. The distribution for that year was as follows: Idiots 171, Imbeciles 463, Morons 199, and Borderlines 11 for a total of 844 individuals who ranged in ages from zero to sixty-nine years. Source: Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province, pp. 251-253.

[72] Bacchi, Liberation Deferred?, pp. 105-106.

[73] Kathleen McConnachie, "Methodology in the Study of Women in History: A Case Study of Helen MacMurchy, M.D.," Ontario History vol. LXXV, no. 1 (March 1983): 68.

[74] Bacchi, Liberation Deferred?, pp. 108-109.

[75] Strong-Boag, "Intruders in the Nursery," p. 166 and Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, pp. 73, 77.

[76] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 14 June 1923.

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[78] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report of the Convener of the Education Committee, 13 December 1924.

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[80] Ibid.

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[86] Veronica Strong-Boag, Introduction to In Times Like These, by Nellie McClung (USA: D. Appleton and Company, 1915; reprint ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. xiv.

[87] Provincial Board of Health, "Alberta Health Bulletin," February 1925, p. 4.

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[96] Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 95.

[97] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 1 October 1929.

[98] Ibid., Newspaper article of 1 October 1929.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

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[101] Sol Cohen, "The School and Personality Development: Intellectual History," in Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington, D.C.: The American Educational Research Association, 1983), p. 116.

[102] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 8 February 1935.

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[104] Ibid., Newspaper article of 12 April 1935.

[105] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 178.

[106] Sol Cohen, "The Mental Hygiene Movement, The Development of Personality and the School: The Medicalization of American Education," History of Education Quarterly (Summer 1983): 132.

[107] Ibid., p. 137.

[108] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 186.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 178.

[112] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 14 April 1917.

[113] Shaw, Proud Heritage, p. 64.

[114] AR 1935, p. 21.

[115] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report to the Vocations Committee of the Canadian Federation of University Women, 1939.

[116] Angus McLaren, "Birth Control and Abortion in Canada, 1870-1920," Canadian Historical Review LIX, 3 (1978): 323.

[117] Ibid., pp. 324-325.

[118] Ibid., p. 330.

[119] Ibid., p. 331.

[120] Ibid., p. 338.

[121] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth-Century America," The Journal of American History vol. LX, no. 2 (Sept. 1973): 345.

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[123] Beth Light and Joy Parr, eds. Canadian Women on the Move, 1867-1920 (Toronto: New Hogtown Press and The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1983), p. 111.

[124] Norah L. Lewis, "Reducing Maternal Mortality in British Columbia: An Educational Process," in Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia, eds. Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro (Victoria, B.C.: Camosun College, 1984), p. 339.

[125] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Collection of newspaper articles on the birth control controversy.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 12 November 1932.

[133] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Collection of newspaper articles on the birth control controversy.

[134] Ibid., Minutes of 8 November 1932 and 13 December 1932.

[135] Ibid., Collection of newspaper articles on the birth control controversy.

[136] In 1933, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL had over eight hundred members.

[137] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of March 1933.

[138] Ibid., Copies of letters to Premier Brownlee and the Alberta MLAs.

[139] Ibid., Collection of newspaper articles on the birth control controversy.

[140] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 258.

[141] For example, the Parents' Information Bureau, established in Kitchener, Ontario in 1929, employed married women as field workers in several parts of Canada. Vivian Dowding worked for the Bureau in Kamloops, British Columbia. Each summer,

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between 1937 and 1944, she travelled through the interior bringing birth control information and free contraceptives to low income women. Source: Mary F. Bishop, "Vivian Dowding: Birth Control Activist 1892-" in Not Just Pin Money, pp. 330-331.

CHAPTER V

EDMONTON CLUB WOMEN'S VIEWS ON WELFARE AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG ALBERTANS

Edmonton club women's efforts to protect and enhance the physical and mental well-being of children was one important aspect of their work for child-centered reform. There were others. Club women also worked extensively in the field of child welfare where they dedicated their time and their financial resources to the care of underprivileged, dependent and neglected children. Part of their work was done in conjunction with child protection agencies, at other times they worked on their own, directly with those children who might benefit from their attentions. In this latter regard, club women held summer camps, they staged special classes, parties and other amusements for girls and boys, and they organized junior clubs. The overriding concern was that children would have healthful, morally uplifting experiences outside the home and family. Juvenile delinquency was a problem that club women studied in the inter-war period, but for the most part, their direct involvement with young offenders was limited. Club women preferred to concentrate upon preventive measures by providing children with wholesome distractions and moral influences that would keep them out of trouble and away from crime.

The United Farmers of Alberta government passed what amounted to a substantial body of progressive legislation, some eighteen acts in total, which affected the welfare of women and children. Irene Parlby, the sole female cabinet minister, devoted most of her attention to this body of legislation. She sponsored a minimum wage act for women, as well as two acts for illegitimate children. One act allowed illegitimate children to be declared legitimate if their parents subsequently married; the second was an amendment concerning the support arrangements for illegitimate children. Traditionally, when an action was brought to establish paternity and liability for support, the defense was that the man being sued was only one of any number of men who could have been responsible. The new amendment gave the judge power to locate all such parties and make the lot liable for support payments. Another member introduced a Dower Act which safeguarded a wife's interests if her husband attempted to dispose of their home or property.[1] Nellie McClung served one term as a Liberal member of the Alberta legislature; during that time she and Irene Parlby called upon the Dominion government to introduce equitable divorce laws and to amend naturalization laws so that British women who married aliens were not disenfranchised.[2]

Amidst the widespread approval of women in organizations, the province passed a Mothers' Allowance Act in 1918. This measure was a form of social assistance intended for mothers whose husbands, by reason of death or disability, were unable to support their families. The province maintained administrative control over the program, appointing a Superintendent of Mothers' Allowances. Municipalities were required, under the act, to appoint and pay inspectors, who would receive applications and forward them to the Superintendent. All decisions to grant, and the amount of the allowances to be paid, rested with the province, which then billed the municipalities quarterly for a full fifty per cent of the costs.[3] In 1923, a UFA member put forward a bill to enlarge the mothers' allowance grants so that the recipients would receive a more reasonable income with which to raise their families.[4] Members of organizations also did their part in terms of ensuring that women had access to allowances. For example, in 1923, a widow in poor health with four children was referred to the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League (CWL). The League placed the widow and her family in Rosary Hall so that she could have "a rest," while it then presented her case to the Superintendent.[5]

Mothers' allowances were introduced in several provinces around the time that Alberta instituted its legislation. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and British Columbia set acts in place between 1916 and 1920. Nova Scotia followed in 1930, and Quebec in 1937, leaving Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick without legislation prior to World War II. The amounts that mothers actually received as "allowances" were not particularly generous, even by the standards of the day. It was estimated that in Alberta, for the year 1939, a mother and her two children would require a monthly sum of fifty-three dollars and twenty cents to maintain an adequate standard of living; the average monthly mothers' allowance payment was thirty-one dollars and twenty-five cents.[6] The situation was equally dismal in the other provinces. There also was dissatisfaction with the "set-up and administration" of the Mothers' Allowance Act in Alberta to the extent that the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL resolved in 1938, to petition the government on behalf of all women's organizations in the province to change the manner of administering the act.[7] Such complaints were not without effect. It was the federal government that responded in 1944, with the introduction of the family allowance, which was a monthly sum paid to mothers for each of their children.[8]

Club Members Aid Children in Need

Alberta's first legislation for the protection of children was passed in 1909 as the Neglected and Dependent Children's Act. A Department of Neglected Children was promptly established, with a Superintendent appointed to oversee all child-saving work in the province. His principal task was to encourage the formation of Children's Aid Societies, which were then responsible for the child protection programs of individual communities. Under the terms of the act, every municipality with a population in excess of ten thousand, was required to provide a children's shelter and to pay a full-time officer appointed by the municipality's Children's Aid Society.[9] In 1916, the act was altered so that towns with populations of five thousand also were required to provide shelters for children.[10]

There were a number of methods by which suspected cases of neglect came to the attention of the Department of Neglected Children. The most common sources of information were reports by police officers and letters from concerned citizens in the community. Club members often discussed specific cases at their meetings and, if the other members felt that action was warranted, a letter would be written to the Department. The Department investigated such cases by sending an inspector to the child's home and interviewing neighbors and others who came into contact with the child's family. If it appeared that the child was neglected or mistreated, the Department usually issued a warning to the parents before taking the extreme measure of breaking up the home. The procedure by which children were apprehended and placed under the care of the provincial government was outlined in the Neglected and Dependent Children's Act. The Superintendent, police officers, or officers of a Children's Aid Society, were authorized to apprehend a child without a warrant. A judge then determined whether or not the child actually was "neglected" within the meaning of the act, and if so, he or she was placed in the care of the Children's Aid Society which became legal guardian. The child next went into the municipality's Children's Shelter until a suitable foster home could be found.[11]

Alberta's child-saving activities were thus carried out through a combination of provincial, municipal, and volunteer effort, with the Superintendent of Neglected Children being responsible for the overall results. Not surprisingly, the Edmonton women's organizations were involved in the non-remunerative, volunteer aspects of this work. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League was one of the organizations most active in this field. The Department of Neglected Children routinely contacted the League to notify the membership that there were Catholic children requiring foster homes. The League would then inform its parish priests so that the appropriate announcements could be made from pulpits. The need for foster homes was especially great during the First World War and in the recession immediately afterward. In February of 1919 alone, the League was attempting to find Catholic homes for a thirteen year old girl, a two month old girl, and baby boys of two, fourteen, and eighteen months. Additionally, the League monitored the Department to ensure that Catholic children went into Catholic foster homes. When it discovered, for example, that a Catholic family had been placed in a Methodist home, a League member immediately was dispatched to interview the Department.[12]

Similarly, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire became involved with the Department of Neglected Children and the local Children's Aid Society when the Society sent the Municipal Chapter a letter soliciting its interest in the "excellent work being done for the soldiers' orphans as well as other children in our city."[13] The Municipal Chapter responded with a fifty dollar donation to the Children's Aid Boarding Home, and it continued to demonstrate an interest in the Children's Aid Society thereafter. Usually the Municipal Chapter provided money to the Society and in times of need its contributions were substantial. In 1920, when the Society determined that a new Boarding Home was required, the Municipal Chapter had the members of every primary chapter take individual memberships in the Children's Aid Society.[14] Additionally, some primary chapters chose to make monthly donations to the children of the Boarding Home as part of their child welfare work. In 1923, five primary chapters were donating from fifty cents to two dollars per month.[15]

Both the Edmonton Municipal Chapter and the Edmonton Senior Subdivision made contributions to the Children's Aid Boarding Home whenever specific needs were isolated. A washing machine was purchased by the Municipal Chapter, flour sacks were collected and delivered, and at one point, when a primary chapter was disbanding, it asked that its funds "be devoted to buying underwear for the Children's Home."[16] The Senior Subdivision saw to the religious education of the Catholic children by arranging to have catechism classes taught, and at Christmas the members provided gifts, games, and money for all the children at the Boarding Home. Organizations such as the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, became involved through serving as representatives on the advisory board of the Children's Aid Society.[17]

There were other groups in the city that were dedicated to caring for children in need. The Sisters of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd complied with a request from the Department of Neglected Children in 1912, to come to Edmonton to establish an institution for the reformation of wayward girls. In 1922, the Sisters reported that they were caring for thirty-three delinquent girls and that they had an additional thirty-four little girls under their protection. By 1926, they were caring for an average of one hundred girls at all times, and by 1930, the number had risen to one hundred and twenty girls.[18] The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL lent its assistance. Together with the other League subdivisions, it raised considerable annual sums of money for the institution and even so, the Sisters were forced to supplement their funds by various means, including teaching and laundry work.[19] The Edmonton Senior Subdivision began providing assistance to St. Mary's Home for Boys in 1923, when it donated two hundred dollars to furnish the dormitories.[20] Funds for the care of these boys originated from a variety of sources, some were supported by the provincial government, some received civic relief, and some relied upon assistance from relatives. A substantial number, however, were supported by the Catholic Women's League.

For example, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision reported in 1929 that there were forty-seven boys in the Home, twenty-six of them had either government, civic, or family funding, the remaining twenty-one had no income at all. The situation did not improve in the Depression years. At mid-decade only twenty-one of the forty boys in the Home received outside funding.[21] In fact, both St. Mary's and the Good Shepherd often were filled beyond capacity. When it was absolutely impossible to accommodate more children, the usual course adopted by the Edmonton Senior Subdivision was to appeal to the Mothers' Allowance Board on behalf of the individual families in need.

The Department of Neglected Children relied extensively upon the input of volunteer groups such as the Edmonton women's organizations. Their contributions formed an important component of the child-saving arrangements in the province. In 1929, the Department itself was dissolved and child welfare was subsumed under the broader welfare considerations of the Bureau of Charity and Relief.[22] Fortunately, the Edmonton women's organizations continued their own child welfare activities. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, for example, did not relax its interest in the Good Shepherd Home for Girls or the St. Mary's Home for Boys.

Even during the period in which the Department of Neglected Children was in operation, much of the club women's child welfare activities were carried out as part of their more general relief efforts on behalf of women and families. The division between child welfare and social welfare was an ambiguous one, and there always was considerable overlapping since it often was the case that children in need lived within families that required aid. For years the Edmonton Senior Subdivision maintained separate child and social welfare committees until finally, in order to avoid duplication of effort within the organization, the two committees were combined in the mid-1920s and functioned as the child and social welfare committee. When the Senior Subdivision sent relief items outside Edmonton to towns and rural areas they usually were intended for entire families rather than for children alone. A tremendous number of families relied upon the Senior Subdivision's aid. In the early 1920s, a family of eight living in Calder was discovered to be in great need since the husband had gone to Saskatchewan to find work and had failed to send any money for support. A member gathered together clothes, provisions, and money and drove out to Calder to deliver them to the family.[23] One month later bedding, dishes, and kitchen utensils were sent to a family near Tofield which had sustained a house fire, a family of twelve received aid, and three other families were given money and provisions.[24] In fact, this sort of relief work was typical fare for the Edmonton Senior Subdivision throughout the inter-war period. Within a four month period in 1935, the organization sent out one thousand, one hundred and two articles, eleven new layettes, one new cook stove, and several orders of groceries. Two months later the tally had risen to five thousand, six hundred articles which had gone to a total of two hundred and twenty-four families.[25]

The relief efforts on the part of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE also extended to entire families and frequently was in the form of clothing and food. Usually this organization included magazines and other reading materials in its packages and it maintained a magazine fund for this purpose. The onset of the Great Depression placed an increasing burden upon the Municipal Chapter's relief activites. A local newspaper reported that there had been more calls for assistance from families in rural Alberta than at any time in the Chapter's history, and that through appeals to friends and interested citizens, these requests had been met as far as possible.[26] However, the resources of the Chapter were being strained to such an extent that it in turn appealed to the provincial government to assume some onus of responsibility for rural relief cases.[27] Even so, the Chapter continued its own program of relief to rural families in need.

The Edmonton Municipal Chapter maintained a special interest in providing assistance to soldiers and their families. Food, clothing, reading materials, schoolbooks, and toys were supplied first to this deserving group. Beginning in 1920, the primaries under the Municipal Chapter began providing a Christmas dinner and small gifts to at least one soldiers' family each, and this practice developed into a traditional annual event thereafter. Shortly after the First World War, the Red Cross Society attempted to coordinate relief efforts by establishing a central information bureau to which other societies and women's organizations could refer when they received an application for help from soldiers or their dependents.[28] In this way the Red Cross attempted to maximize relief efforts, screen spurious requests, and avoid duplication of effort. Several Edmonton women's organizations, including the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL and the Women's Canadian Club, were associated with this effort through their affiliation with the Red Cross Society, but it was the Municipal Chapter that demonstrated the most definite interest in this cause.

When the first unit of the Catholic Women's League, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision, was established in 1912, its members immediately became interested in aiding rural and immigrant women who came to the city in search of work. Members took turns meeting all trains arriving in Edmonton so that the female passengers could be intercepted and directed to Rosary Hall, which was the League's hostel for women and their children. The League operated Rosary Hall until 1915, when the Sisters of Providence took over its management. Nevertheless the League, and the Edmonton Senior Subdivision in particular, continued to support Rosary Hall through the inter-war years.[29] Women new to Edmonton could receive meals and board at Rosary Hall at a nominal fee, or if they were unable to pay, these would be provided free of charge until the women secured employment. Another of the services offered at Rosary Hall was free assistance in finding jobs. Private employment bureaus existed in Edmonton, but the costs of their services tended to be prohibitive, so that to many women the Hall's service was crucial. The types of jobs available to women through the Rosary Hall employment bureau were office work, and domestic service in private homes and for priests. Additionally, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision opened a Catholic Teacher Exchange and a Nurse Exchange in 1921, both operated out of Rosary Hall.[30]

In effect, Rosary Hall was one of Edmonton's earliest women's shelters. The original intention behind its founding was to provide a safe, protective surrounding for rural and immigrant women who arrived in Edmonton friendless and alone. However, within the inter-war period its function continued to broaden. Widows with children were sheltered at the Hall until jobs and permanent accommodations could be secured for them. Medicines were administered to the ill and when necessary, the services of practical nurses were secured. In at least one instance, three weeks room and board was given free to a convalescent patient from one of the city hospitals, after which she was sufficiently recovered to resume her work.[31] That Rosary Hall was filling an important need in the urban community was evidenced by the fact that the Edmonton Senior Subdivision found it necessary in 1928 to help found a second, parallel institution named the Sisters of Service Hostel. This did not appear to significantly diminish the work of Rosary Hall in the Depression years, where the organization was serving anywhere from two to seven thousand free meals annually. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision continued to sponsor fundraising events including tag days, raffles, showers, teas, and rummage sales in order that Rosary Hall be enabled to maintain its operations.

Child welfare in Alberta functioned through a combination of provincial, municipal, and voluntary effort. Those women's organizations that took a special interest in the cause, such as the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL and the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, had substantial responsibilities. In fact, their unpaid participation was an integral component in the creation of a progressive system of child and family welfare in this province. Club women aided children in a variety of circumstances, be they in institutions and in need of comforts and foster homes, or living with their parents in which case the entire family was given assistance.

Members' participation even extended to the provision of temporary shelters for single women and for mothers with their children in tow. Governments, communities, and especially children depended greatly upon the interest and efforts of women's organizations and these certainly did not cease after the inter-war period. In the 1940s the Alberta Provincial Chapter of the IODE was single-handedly responsible for exposing grave deficiencies in the child welfare arrangements of that decade, particularly the practice of exporting Alberta born babies to the United States for adoption. The IODE's inquiry succeeded in encouraging the Social Credit government to appoint two royal commissions to investigate child welfare conditions and practices.[32]

The Problem of the Young Offender

The manner in which Albertans chose to assist street children, orphans, and others in need was established in 1909 with the passage of the Neglected and Dependent Children's Act. A year earlier the province had made some provision for the treatment of another class of 'problem' child, the juvenile delinquent, when it passed the Industrial Schools Act. A Superintendent of Industrial Schools immediately was appointed and, after he had toured juvenile court and industrial school facilities across the North American continent, he recommended that Alberta accept Manitoba's offer to train delinquent boys at its industrial school at Portage la Prairie. The government accepted his recommendation and thereby saved itself the costs of constructing a modern cottage system in Alberta.[33]

At the same time that Alberta passed its legislation, the Dominion government came forward with a more comprehensive prescription for the treatment of young offenders in the Juvenile Delinquents Act of 1908. This act conferred to juvenile courts wide ranging powers in dealing with young offenders. The court could impose fines of up to ten dollars, it could commit a child to the custody of a probation officer or supervise a child in his own home through a probation officer, it could place a child in a foster home, commit him to the care of a Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children or a Children's Aid Society, or it could send him to a refuge, reformatory, or industrial school. A child could not be incarcerated in an adult jail, penitentiary, or police station. Once the court disposed of a case, the child still remained its ward until either the court terminated the relationship or the child reached the age of twenty-one. The act directed judges and all others involved in the care of a delinquent child to treat him "not as a criminal, but as a misdirected and misguided child, and one needing aid, encouragement, help and assistance."[34]

Only the provinces had the right to establish courts. Therefore, provincial cooperation was crucial to the application of the new Dominion legislation. The act provided for its own piecemeal proclamation. It went in force only after a provincial government had created juvenile courts and detention homes.[35] This proceeded rather slowly across the country with Winnipeg, Halifax, Charlottetown, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria being among the first to establish juvenile courts.[36] Alberta had a functioning system of such courts by 1912.[37]

Edmonton women's organizations demonstrated a concern for the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency, but they tended to limit any direct involvement with such children. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League was the exception. Through the Good Shepherd Home for Girls and later the O'Connell Institute, the Senior Subdivision contributed extensively to the protection and reformation of delinquent girls. Both institutions housed orphans together with young offenders, and at the O'Connell Institute all received a public school and commercial education.[38] The Senior Subdivision also attempted to assist women who had been sentenced to prison. A committee was appointed in the early 1920s to "look after girls" when they left prison and to send reading and sewing materials to them while they were serving their sentences.[39] Additionally, a connection was established with the Juvenile

Court when the Senior Subdivision's chaplain, Father Carlton, was appointed judge in 1922. For at least a decade he kept the club posted on the work of the court.[40]

Apart from the Edmonton Senior Subdivision, women's organizations in the city were unwilling to become involved with delinquent adolescents. A telling example occurred in 1929, when the daily newspapers reported at length on the arrest of "Miss X," a teenage prostitute who had been working the downtown area of the city. Miss X had been charged with vagrancy, and in the course of her court testimony certain details of her life were revealed. She had come to Edmonton at age fourteen to find work. The only job that she had been able to secure was in the cafeteria of a department store where she worked at the rate of seven dollars and fifty cents per week, not enough even to pay her room and board. In the evenings, her recreation consisted of wandering the streets, and there she met a taxi-driver with whom she eventually shared lodgings. This man became her first pimp, but there were several others afterwards, and each one apparently provided her with the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. Miss X's arrest precipitated a police "vice ring clean-up" wherein several other girls were arrested and their court testimonies duly reported in the city papers.[41]

Edmonton club women responded in a rather singular manner to this undeniable evidence of teenage prostitution being carried on in the city. The Local Council of Women, together with its affiliated societies, issued a resolution protesting "the publicity given in our local papers to police court cases in connection with the vice ring."[42] Evidently these club women were offended by the details of this extreme form of juvenile delinquency. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE reacted in a more positive manner when it prepared a resolution for the press which endorsed the provincial and civic governments' efforts "towards the suppression of all vice, especially that against women and children."[43] A year previously, the Municipal Chapter had endorsed a related resolution sent by its national executive which called for the punishment of men who committed crimes against minor children. This resolution had been forwarded to the National Council of Women of Canada for further action.[44] Generally, urban middle-class women were uncomfortable with the spectre of children behaving in a deviant manner. It is quite possible, in a period which witnessed the rise of child care "experts," assertive professionals who claimed to have the right answers, that club women felt unqualified and ill prepared to deal closely with juvenile delinquency. Club women assumed a more preventive role by trying to create environments which might avert children from the path of delinquency.

However, club women did give careful study to the problem of the young offender. A most comprehensive examination was done by a committee of the Women's University Club of Edmonton in 1937. This committee covered several facets of the topic including the physiology of adolescence and criminal physiology, the juvenile courts, probation, when probation failed, and penal institutions. According to the committee's report, there were three principal causes of delinquency. For some the cause was wholly external and could be attributed to parental neglect, bad companions, want of proper amusement, defective education, want of employment, poor housing, and poverty. For others, delinquency came about as a result of the suppression of innate, healthful tendencies, and for the remainder the cause was mental or physical defects for which the child was in no way responsible.[45]

A new Dominion Juvenile Delinquents Act, which replaced the earlier 1909 version, was passed in 1929. The University Club's committee on the young offender discussed Alberta's adaptation to this new act in its report. As before, the act provided that the child be dealt with "not as an offender but as one in a condition of delinquency and therefore requiring help and guidance and proper supervision."[46] Edmonton judges were appointed and served without remuneration. Trials were private and were held in the Department of the Attorney-General at the Parliament Buildings; no names in connection with trials could be published. A section of the Edmonton jail had been set aside for juvenile detention, since juveniles awaiting trial were not allowed to be detained with adult prisoners. The proceedings of the court were informal and the oath was not administered. The court had the power to deal with adults who contributed to the delinquency of a child. The new act continued to grant the courts a number of alternatives in dealing with delinquents. Such children could be fined, committed to the custody of probation officers, placed in foster homes, or committed to industrial schools or reformatories. Whipping as a form of punishment was removed in 1935. The act also provided for a juvenile court committee made up of citizens qualified to assist the court and its probation officers in an advisory capacity.

The view was expressed in the University Club's report that the law as it stood could not be improved upon, and if it could be carried out fully in the province, "our jails would not be so filled with young prisoners."[47] However, there were some difficulties in this connection. The Edmonton Juvenile Court sat two afternoons per week, usually with two judges working together. The investigating and after care work was carried out by two detectives who were employed as part-time probation officers. Unfortunately, this arrangement was wholly inadequate for the number of delinquents brought before the court, yet funds were not being made available to provide more help. Additionally, judges were handicapped by the circumstance that there was no industrial school in the province to which boys might be sent for "corrective training." Instead boys were being sent either to the industrial school in Regina, Saskatchewan or to the reformatory at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. The high costs associated with sending boys to these institutions meant that judges were hesitant to impose this particular penalty.[48]

If the delinquent behavior of juveniles over the age of sixteen could not be altered through probation, juvenile homes, or foster homes, they were then sent to adult penal institutions. At the time of the University Club committee report, there were six penitentiaries in the country administered through the Dominion government's Department of Justice. Each penitentiary was equipped with a hospital, library, and part time school; religious services were held on Sundays, and every inmate was taught a trade in order that he would be employable after he had served his sentence. Other penal institutions such as city and county jails, prison farms, and reformatories were under provincial control and, apart from the jails, all in reality were prison industrial farms since they had large farms and equipment for industrial work. Neither the Dominion penitentiaries nor the provincial institutions made any attempt to segregate inmates, but the provincial facilities could be the worst since many had dormatories instead of cells, which allowed the "indiscriminate mixing of all types of prisoners at almost all times."[49] Additionally, provincial institutions tended to have fewer services. The reformatories in particular were of concern since this was where most young offenders were sent. None had a school teacher, a full-time chaplain, or adequate library facilities. The Club's report recommended that young offenders be given the "benefit of doctors, psychiatrists, teachers and a trained staff of attendants," and that they be segregated from "hardened criminals."[50]

The University Club's report underscored the need for the public to become familiar with the problem of the young offender, and to that end the Club was willing to perform an educative role. As with most of the Edmonton women's organizations, members were concerned that juvenile delinquents be treated well, and that their antisocial behavior be corrected as completely as possible so that they did not become adult offenders. Of the six organizations represented in this study, only the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL was intimately involved with delinquent children. Others preferred to focus upon preventive measures. Delinquent behavior was in large part attributable to external forces such as the want of wholesome childhood distractions and amusements. It was in this realm that club women sought to make their contribution.

Club Projects for Children

As mothers, Edmonton club women attempted to ensure that the hours their children spent away from home and school were occupied in activities conducive to moral, intellectual, and physical well-being. Naturally enough, this concern was not specific to urban women. It was not uncommon for urban and rural women to join forces in attacking certain influences which they judged to be immoral. In the early 1920s, for example, the rural Women's Institute contacted the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE regarding the "degrading and immoral" entertainment available at summer exhibitions. The Women's Institute suggested that "any entertainment to which any mother cannot with freedom take her children, or any exhibition to which men, women and children are not admitted to all performances be prohibited."[51] The Municipal Chapter gave its wholehearted endorsement to the rural club's resolution. Additionally, Edmonton club women initiated specific projects designed to benefit children confined to hospital and those who came from underprivileged families, and they organized youth clubs such as junior branches of their own groups, Girl Guide companies, and branches of the Junior Red Cross.

During the inter-war years club members attempted to correct what they felt was a distinct paucity in the availability of organized activities for schoolaged children. One of the ways in which they tried to meet this perceived need was to invite high school girls to club meetings where they were entertained as guests and treated to lectures delivered by some of the city's most prominent individuals. Such encounters were advantageous to clubs in terms of the recruitment potential for future members, and they benefited the girls since the opportunity to hear inspiring messages from the socially or academically distinguished, such as university presidents, did not often present themselves. At the start of the inter-war period the Women's University Club of Edmonton conducted a survey of the public places of amusement that were open to girls in the city. In 1919, these consisted of dance halls and cabarets, picture shows and other theaters, church and school clubs, university organizations that were open to the public, the YWCA, and assorted efforts on the part of business houses to entertain girls.[52]

Several Edmonton clubs chose to devote their time to special projects designed to benefit specific groups of children. The Women's University Club chose to concentrate its energies upon the children confined to the Red Cross Ward of the University Hospital. The Club's attention was first called to this need in 1924, when it was discovered that crippled children at the University Hospital where not receiving school instruction. It was suggested that pressure be brought to bear for an Order-in-Council so that a teacher might be provided for these children and other children in like circumstances, but it was realized that the "outlook" was unfavorable and that conditions were not much different in other hospitals in the province. In the meantime, the Club determined to undertake the instructional responsibilities with its own members serving as volunteer teachers. At least in this way the children would receive an education and furthermore, the Club would be in a position to "demonstrate a certain amount of supervision" over the program.[53] This arrangement grew to even greater proportions when the Club next assumed the responsibility of providing regular entertainment for the children, chiefly in the form of reading. Members were secured to volunteer their time to read aloud to the children every Monday and Thursday from books which they had delivered from the University of Alberta's Department of Extension. Children who were able to do so, could then pursue their own reading from the Department of Extension's books for the remainder of the week. When the children were too young to appreciate reading as a form of entertainment, the Club provided supplies of kindergarten materials to better suit this age group's needs. Additionally, the Club held an annual Hallowe'en party for all of the children in the Red Cross Ward.[54]

Few Albertans did not experience hardship during the Great Depression. Certainly the majority of families were poorer than they had been a decade previously, and for those families who already were living near the subsistence level, the Depression brought extensive hardship. It was in this period that the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE determined to provide a summer camp opportunity for the children of the city's most underprivileged families. This was not the first summer camp to be operated by an Edmonton women's club since the Catholic Women's League had begun one in 1918 at Lac Ste. Anne.[55] However, the Municipal Chapter's Depression era effort was unique in the proportions that it came to assume.

When the idea for the summer camp was initiated in September 1931, by the Fort Edmonton Primary Chapter, it met with immediate enthusiasm. The camp was intended for underprivileged girls in the seven to thirteen age group, and early on the question was raised as to the nationality of children eligible for the camp since it was rumored that children of foreign born parents would not be chosen. The decision was "that there would be no discrimination, each case being decided on its own merits, but naturally Canadian and British children would receive first consideration."[56] It is difficult to determine the extent to which the club may or may not have adhered to this eligibility requirement. Arrangements were made in subsequent years for school nurses to recommend fifty children for the camp, "40 to be given preference, and 10 as substitutes in case, in the opinion of our investigators any of the first 40 do not meet with the necessary requirements."[57]

The first Municipal Chapter summer camp got underway in 1932 at Cooking Lake. Together the primary chapters raised over nine hundred dollars for its operation. A cottage was constructed, articles of used clothing were collected, especially bathing suits and outgrown sweaters, and a staff consisting of a member of the Order, a camp mother, a cook general, a maid and several play organizers was assembled.[58] The children's activities at the camp consisted of swimming, games, hikes, picnics, rest periods, concerts, prayers every evening, and weekly Sunday School services. The club's association with the camp children did not cease once the summer season had ended. In September of the first year, the YWCA suggested that the Municipal Chapter do follow-up work with the children by having them take swimming and gymnastics lessons through the Y. The Municipal Chapter agreed to a joint arrangement with the YWCA whereby the Y would provide the lessons each Saturday and the Chapter would supply the outfits consisting of rompers, running shoes, bathing suits, caps, towels and soap, as well as lunches.[59]

Thus, what began as a summer camp project for underprivileged children, quickly evolved into a year-round interest which persisted throughout the 1930s. Christmas parties and trips to the theater became part of the annual activities. In 1935, one of the Chapter's members agreed to undertake the responsibility of organizing the camp girls into a Girl Guide Company which became known as the Lady Alice Scott Chapter.[60] In the following year the Municipal Chapter increased its "child and family welfare" work to such proportions that the camp had to be moved to a new, more spacious site at Edmonton Beach.[61] However, the added expenditure associated with this increase exacted a toll upon the Chapter so that by 1939, the members were forced to consider "whether or not the greatest benefit for the amount of money expended for Child Welfare work was being obtained through our camp and follow-up work."[62] The Chapter voted to terminate this particular project.

The Depression years presented a period of considerable hardship for lower income families. Through the Edmonton Municipal Chapter's efforts, young girls whose families were on relief, or were surviving on war pensions or widows' pensions, were given summer holidays that they otherwise would not have had, as well as weekend swimming and gymnastics classes that spanned the remainder of the year. A firm requirement for the swimming classes was that the girls first pass physical examinations which, together with the ones that they received in the schools, would have facilitated the identification of medical ailments. Even the camp experience alone had a beneficial affect on the children. The Municipal Chapter was gratified to note "the improvement in health and weight of the children as they returned to the City"; undoubtedly the parents also noticed, because several of them wrote letters to the Order conveying their appreciation.[63] It was through efforts such as these that Edmonton club women were able to introduce underprivileged girls to leisure activities that were more commonly the preserve of urban middle class children.

Another way Edmonton club women sought to provide wholesome diversions for the city's young was through the creation of youth organizations, the favorite of which were junior branches of the women's clubs, Girl Guide companies, and Junior Red Cross branches. Of these only the Junior Red Cross included boys in its membership. The earliest mention of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE becoming involved in this work was in 1913, when a committee was struck to meet with principals to discuss the formation of children's chapters in the schools. During the war the Municipal Chapter appointed an Honorary Regent to help form junior chapters and attend Municipal meetings on their behalf; by the start of the inter-war period these chapters were well underway in the schools.[64] The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL was equally enthusiastic about the concept of junior leagues, but unlike the IODE, it sought members who had finished their formal school experience. The Senior Subdivision's first junior league was formed in the early 1920s as the Business Girls' Club. The original membership consisted of thirty-five girls, but it expanded greatly a few months later when the entire Nurses' Guild joined.[65] By 1925, the combined membership in the Edmonton juniors was one hundred.[66]

Edmonton club women supported the Girl Guide movement as a viable social and recreational alternative for the city's young. According to Lady Baden-Powell, the international spokesperson for the movement, the various stages of the Guiding program were intended "to suit the psychology of the child at different ages." There were "religious, educational, recreational, and social" benefits to be enjoyed by every girl from the age of eight onwards.[67] The Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton was active in promoting the movement. Speakers of prominence, such as Lady Baden-Powell, were invited to address the membership, and at such times the Girl Guide companies of the city were invited as guests. In the early 1920s, the Club held a tea in honor of Mrs. H.D. Warren, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Girl Guides. Mrs. Warren emphasized the program's promotion of home life, stressing that "after all, the most important person in the home is the mother, and it is to preserve the home and national life at its best, that these organizations are in existence."[68] When Girl Guides studied civics they were taught "how to use the women's vote intelligently," and to take an interest in their local health department, but the underlying purpose of this instruction was to prepare the girls for the day when they would have homes of their own. The reason that reformatories and industrial schools existed was because of a lack of the "right kind of homes."[69] Through the training that they received in Girl Guide companies, the prospective mothers of the future would be better equipped to create that right kind of home environment.

By the early 1920s there already were twenty-four thousand Guides across the Dominion. Edmonton had seven companies. Yet the movement was about to receive a boost when in 1923, at the annual convention of the National Chapter of the IODE, a resolution was passed whereby Junior IODE Chapters would be transformed into Girl Guide companies. Mrs. Duncan Smith, an active member of the Municipal Chapter's executive, was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Edmonton Girl Guides.[70] Thereafter, all Junior IODE Chapters in the city entered into Guide work. In the 1930s, when the public's attention was preoccupied more with relief efforts than with the provision of children's amusements, the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE organized at least three Junior Chapters as Guide companies.[71]

Guiding was compatible with the Junior IODE insofar as both claimed to be "non-military, imperial, non-partisan, non-class, international and inter-denominational."[72] Although the Guide movement has been characterized by some researchers as being strictly "middle class,"[73] the evidence suggests that companies were formed in certain Ruthenian, Russian, Jewish, and Japanese settlements in the Dominion.[74] Furthermore, when the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE organized the Lady Alice Scott Junior Chapter in 1935, its original membership was comprised of underprivileged girls who had attended the Municipal Chapter's summer camp. It is incontestable that prominent women's groups enthusiastically promoted the Girl Guide movement. In Edmonton alone the Women's Canadian Club and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE became its staunch supporters. Where possible, other Edmonton organizations lent their support. For example, the Homemaking Committee of the Edmonton Home Economics Association conducted all of the Girl Guide cooking tests.[75]

Junior Red Cross Societies were popular in Edmonton schools, but of the women's clubs represented in this study, only the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL maintained a real interest in actually establishing branches. The Senior Subdivision's work in this area was initiated in 1922 when it appointed a member to begin organizing branches in Separate School classrooms.[76] Part of the success of the Junior Red Cross movement may be attributed to its classroom-based formula in which the teacher voluntarily conducted club business during school hours. Another factor in its success was that it utilized educational techniques in vogue during the period, particularly the project method.[77] The Junior Red Cross program promoted good health, moral character, civic mindedness, and humanitarian gestures such as raising funds for crippled children. It did this through the methodology of the new education:

> Participating in meetings, making decisions about activities, voting on programs and organizing fund raising campaigns constituted learning by doing and helped create democratic

> citizens. Activity-centered learning was evident in the posters, plays and debates that were used, in the committees that were organized and in the application of health rules to the classroom itself. The whole child was being educated-the physical, the moral, the emotional, and the intellectual-as the children both improved their own health and that of other children.[78]

Additionally, the ideas of the Junior Red Cross program were integrated with subjects in the regular school curriculum through supplementary materials provided by the organization. In this way health, Canadian history, civics, geography, and nature study were affected.[79]

Edmonton club women's seemingly marginal interest in establishing branches of the Junior Red Cross in schools is explained by the fact that the junior organization already had a parent in the Red Cross Society. Other Edmonton women's clubs, therefore, participated in this work through their affiliation with the Red Cross Society. Apparently the Junior Red Cross did not suffer because of this lack of direct intervention. By the 1930s its national enrollment was over one hundred thousand, making it a "fixture in Canadian schools"; after the Second World War that number had risen to over one million schoolchildren.[80] Undoubtedly the Junior Red Cross program was one avenue by which Alberta schoolteachers gained an early classroom experience in employing methods congruent with progressive education practices.

It was through the formal organizational structure of clubs that active, moderately leisured, middle class women in Edmonton were able to promote the welfare of the city's young. Children in nearly every circumstance benefited from their attentions. Homeless, neglected, and orphaned children who were in institutional care received material support and sometimes foster homes from club women. Children within lower income families were provided with food, clothing, monetary assistance, and small comforts. The provincial, municipal, and civic governments of the day depended to an extraordinary degree upon the voluntary assistance and contributions of club women in almost all of their child-saving endeavors. Juvenile delinquency was the one area from which the majority of Edmonton groups absented themselves. Instead, programs to deal with the redirection and possible rehabilitation of difficult children became the purview of a new cadre of trained professionals which included legal and medical personnel, social workers, and parole officers. In the face of this expertise, club members felt ill-suited to participate. Even so, certain clubs did become involved, and still others chose to examine the problem from afar.

The inter-war economy was notably unstable with the country being in recession for more years than not. For this reason the opportunity of providing social and recreational opportunities for adolescents was largely available to the Edmonton women's organizations. Members believed that much juvenile delinquency was caused by a lack of wholesome diversions for children, and that through their efforts and example, children might be protected from immoral influences. Thus, underprivileged children were treated to holidays in summer camps and weekend classes at the local YWCA. They, together with their middle class peers, were encouraged to join club sponsored junior organizations which promoted the values and behaviors that club women held dear, and it was done within a friendly, supportive, social environment.

Moral Protectionism and the Media

According to historian Ramsay Cook in *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada*, a nineteenth century intellectual crisis in Christianity, "provoked by Darwinian science and historical criticism of the Bible," led to a fundamental transformation in Canadian social reform thought.[81] Orthodox Christianity's preoccupation with man's salvation gradually was replaced with a concern for social salvation. Liberal Christians, bent on saving the church from obsolescence, succeeded in translating Christianity into "a message of social reform and good citizenship."[82] The popularity of the Social Gospel in Canada through the end of the First World War was an attestation to the short-term viability of the strategy. But in

Cook's interpretation, this strategy weakened Christianity's once pervasive influence upon English Canadian life; by attempting to unite the sacred with the secular, liberal Christian reformers unwittingly "acted as the accommodating midwife to the birth of a secular view of society."[83] Hence, between the nineteenth century and the inter-war period, Canadian society passed "from Protestant orthodoxy through religious liberalism to a secular humanism founded on social science."[84]

Prior to the 1920s, ethical teachings were the purview of clergymen well versed in Christian theology. Canadians traditionally turned to the clergy for moral leadership. Western prairie women had long complemented the clergy's role by assuming the responsibility for safeguarding the moral fibre of society. It was women who crusaded most tirelessly for the banishment of societal evils such as alcohol and prostitution. Their failure to successfully affect change through pressuring provincial and municipal governments was an important reason why prairie women began to demand the right to vote. Moral reform, especially prohibition, was one of the early objectives of the western suffragists, although attaining the vote "soon became a goal in itself."[85] Much of the male support for woman suffrage was based upon the belief that women were morally superior to men. In the words of an Ontario clergyman, "The ballot in the hands of women will give them power to carry on those great moral and social reforms that depend upon legislation."[86] A popular view among historians is that female suffrage failed to achieve the expectations held of it. Enfranchised women did not alter western social life "radically," politics did not become "noticeably cleaner," "in short, they failed to live up to their reputation of moral superiority."[87]

Such judgements require reevaluation because, if anything, women's role as moral guardians became more pronounced in the inter-war period. Women's prominence in this field was associated, to a certain degree, with the decline of the Social Gospel. Once the Social Gospel "went into retreat" in the early 1920s, the leadership and at one time pervasive moral influence of ministers went with it.[88]

Canada continued to be a church-going nation, but the trend toward secularization was afoot, and it was left to women to promote a moral society. Edmonton club members did this chiefly through their interactions both with, and on behalf of, children. For example, their efforts to organize junior clubs for children and their attempts to provide underprivileged children with middle class social and recreational opportunities were intended to ensure that children's time away from home and school was spent in a wholesome and morally correct environment.

The media expanded tremendously during the 1920s and 1930s. Mass circulation magazines, film, and radio each made their appearances alongside newspapers as influential means for public communication. These were excellent vehicles for the dissemination of mass culture, but the problem was that most of it was American. To Edmonton club women this posed considerable danger to Canadian morals and culture. Although American magazines had been available in Canada since the 1890s, their circulation increased to fifty million by the mid-1920s. More Canadians read *Ladies Home Journal*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Pictorial Review*, and *McCall's* than domestic magazines such as *Maclean's*, *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, *Chatelaine*, and *Mayfair*.[89] Club women were quick to protest this trend. In 1921 the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton passed the following resolution:

> Believing that some restriction of the large circulation through the Canadian mails and the extensive sale on Canadian news-stands of United States magazines particularly those which have adopted a policy of antagonism to Great Britain and of misrepresentation of Canada and of those of a sensational and often immoral character is desirable; that the present condition is harmful to Canadian ideals of citizenship and demoralizing to our youth; and that it retards the development of Canadian magazines:
>
> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Club of Edmonton respectfully suggests to the Government of Canada through the Finance Minister the advisability of imposing a duty on these magazines or of taking such other steps as will effectually curtail their sale in this

country.[90]

Edmonton club women were not alone in their concerns. Two publishers' lobby groups, the Canadian National Newspaper and Periodicals Association and the Magazine Publishers' Association, contended that American magazines "were a menace to Canadian ideals and to the moral development of the youth of this country."[91] Both demanded government action.

Not every women's organization looked favorably upon the idea of repressing printed matter. The Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club agreed to join with the Calgary Branch in "tak[ing] a stand with regard to the banning of certain publications from the Canadian mails."[92] Other groups including the Women's University Club, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, the Local Council of Women, and the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, continued to call for restrictions on American magazines based upon the perception that such material was not conducive to Canadian morals. The Dominion government did respond in 1931 by imposing a tariff on American publications entering the country.[93] The Edmonton organizations complained no further.

The majority of American periodicals were aimed at an adult readership; new ones in the 1920s were directed principally to middle class women.[94] However, American motion pictures were a popular source of entertainment for Canadian young and old alike, and the potential dangers which this product posed to Canadian culture and morals was of extreme concern to Edmonton club women. At the request of the Women's University Club, the Edmonton Local Council of Women appointed a censor of moving pictures in 1913. A provision in the provincial law already had been made for a board of censors to supervise films, but the law had not yet been enforced, much to the purported dismay of the city's theater managers who said that they would "welcome censorship" since they wished to show "only the highest grade of films."[95] The Local Council of Women and its affiliated societies were completely willing to fulfill this function. In 1917, the Council voted to appoint a board of women to act as "unofficial" censors of the city's moving picture and vaudeville theaters.[96]

The motion picture industry was a part of that "northbound tidal wave of American mass culture" which so raised the ire of Canadian nationalists.[97] They had good reasons to be concerned since almost all movies shown in Canada were products of the United States; Hollywood even considered Canada as within its "domestic" box office.[98] Edmonton club women responded to the American film threat in three distinctive ways. As already indicated, their first reaction was to perform a censorship function. Members of the medical community supported this role for club women. A physician, addressing the Women's Canadian Club at the start of the inter-war period, admonished her listeners to consider it their duty to know the class of pictures shown in the city and who attended them. Motion pictures had "doubtless a great effect on the child," but in her view these effects were negative. The atmosphere in movie houses was unhealthy, and movies themselves spoiled children's initiative: "What it took this generation many years of reading to acquire in culture, the child of today is willing to try to get for a dime."[99]

A second way in which club women attempted to counteract the pervasiveness of American films was to actively promote all British films shown in the city. The Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE appointed one of its members, a Miss Cottingham, to regularly interview theater managers to obtain the names and dates of all British films to be shown in Edmonton, so that the memberships of all the primaries could be notified. Through this process, theater managers were made aware of the local demand for British films, and in turn, club women and their families were provided with the opportunity to view pictures such as "Jack's the Boy," "Dangerous Lady," "There Goes the Bride," "Marry Me," "The Maid of the Mountains," and "The Faithful Heart."[100] In 1938, the Rialto Theater alone ran more than thirty British films.[101] The Edmonton Municipal Chapter also made a point of encouraging school children to see British movies. For example, in 1934, Miss Cottingham obtained the co-operation of the Edmonton School Board in having grades VII and VIII students see the film "The Life of the Prince of Wales." The students were then instructed to submit five-hundred word essays to the Superintendent of Schools. The writer of the winning essay received a Dartmoor pony obtained from the Prince of Wales Ranch.[102]

Canada was hardly the only country to succumb to American film domination; "Hollywood became the *world* centre for motion picture production" within the inter-war years.[103] Therefore, a third strategy adopted by Edmonton club women was to try to induce Hollywood to produce films which would be suitable for younger viewers. This was an issue which aroused the intense emotions of club women. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL had resigned from the Local Council of Women in the early 1930s over the matter of the latter organization's support for a birth control clinic in the city. However, when it became known that the Local Council of Women was preparing to address the issue of the betterment of children's movies, the Senior Subdivision resolved to set aside its differences and appointed two delegates to attend the Council meetings.[104] Yet it was the Women's University Club of Edmonton which led on this issue when it initiated a "Survey of the Present Position of Films for Children, Educational and Otherwise," in 1933-34.

The University Club's final report was based upon extensive research. The education committee sent to England for literature, sifted through articles and books, collected press cuttings, examined catalogues, interviewed local theater managers, and corresponded with numerous authorities including Mrs. Valence Patriarche, Film Censor of Winnipeg, Miss Kathleen Snowden, Assistant Director of the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare, Mr. F. C. Badgley, Director of the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau of Ottawa, and Col. John Cooper, President of the Motion Pictures Distributors and Exhibitors Association of Canada.[105] According to the research findings of the day, motion pictures were seen to have profound physical, mental, and moral or spiritual effects upon children. Witnessing scenes of horror and crime harmed children's nervous systems. Boys demonstrated a twenty-one per cent increase in restless sleep, and girls a fourteen percent increase, which continued for four to five nights after they had seen an "exciting" film. The implications were cause for concern: "Sleep impairment weakens powers of inhibition, scenes of terror or fright produce in many children a species of shell-shock, sewing seeds for neuroses and psychoses for the future."[106] The moral and spiritual effects were equally as serious. Hollywood films falsified values taught in the home and church, and instead promoted glamorous, nonspiritual ideals.

Warnings against the "demoralizing effects" of American produced films had been issued worldwide from China, Japan, India, Italy, Turkey, Germany, France, and South America. Canadian provinces had established censorship boards to combat the problem. In Alberta, films deemed suitable for family viewing were given a "Passed U" (Universal) designation which meant that children under fourteen were permitted to see them. Additionally, the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare compiled monthly lists of films which the various provincial censorship boards had approved. These were available for the asking, but the unfortunate circumstance was that the lists often arrived "too late to be of service in the West."[107] The American *Parents' Magazine* also published lists of classified films for children aged eight to twelve, youth aged twelve to eighteen, and adults. The films were judged by five prominent organizations, the National Film Estimate Service, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, the University Women's Club of Los Angeles, and the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. These organizations passed stringent judgements; in a "typical" list of one hundred and thirty-two films, only twenty-two were listed as suitable for children and youth.[108]

The Women's University Club put forward a number of suggestions as to how parents might "eliminate some of the evils" of American films. One suggestion was "A *guided selection of the films our children see.*" A second was "An extremely useful corrective in the form of the *adult discount*, explaining to our children the use of dummies, blank cartridges, and trick photography." A third suggestion was "The pointing out that the Canadian Criminal Code does not permit the carrying of firearms without a permit." A fourth was "The discounting and showing up of false ideals, and wrong conceptions of the moral code, dealing with marriage and divorce, love and sex." A fifth suggestion was "The whole thing should be spoken of as *artificial* and therefore apart from life." A sixth was "We should support any selected programs for selected audiences, such for example as the combined comedy, instruction and marionette show held lately at the Strand." A seventh suggestion was "We should support the development and use of non-commercial films, such as those produced and loaned by the Extension Department of the University of Alberta." Finally, an eighth suggestion was "We should support such counter attractions as Children's and Young People's dramatic efforts."[109]

More than half of these suggestions involved parents reacting to films that their children already had seen, the others involved having their children attend something other than American films. None got at the root of the problem, which was to compel Hollywood to produce better films for children. The University Club had a tentative solution, but since the problem emanated from a foreign country, it was most difficult for the Club to exercise any real authority. What the Club desired was for a board of control to be established in the United States to examine, amend, delete, or reject all movie scenarios *before* they were accepted for production. This would attack the problem "at the fountain head," by causing actors, producers, artists, and writers "to conform to a higher code of morals."[110]

Thus, through attempting to persuade Hollywood to produce better films, through censorship, and through the promotion of British alternatives, Edmonton club women sought to affect an improvement in children's motion pictures. One other strategy, the promotion of Canadian films, might have been employed had circumstances permitted. In truth, however, the Canadian movie industry never did present a viable alternative to the Hollywood product. There was a short period between 1919 and 1923 when Canadians launched a feature film industry, but by 1930 the country's "movie future was already behind her."[111] The only serious attempt "to stimulate a native Canadian cinema" occurred in 1939, with the founding of the National Film Board, which began to produce films related to school curricula.[112]

Radio was another new source of entertainment and current events in the inter-war years, and here again the American influence was pervasive. Even though both countries initiated broadcasts in 1920, the medium developed more quickly in the United States, so that by the end of the decade it was estimated that "80 per cent of the programs listened to by Canadians were American."[113] However, a Canadian response was forthcoming. A 1929 royal commission comprised of the Deputy Ministers of Education and others, recommended that a national broadcasting system be established and that private broadcasting be regulated.[114] Edmonton club women also expressed their opinions as to what they envisioned for the future of Canadian radio. The Women's University Club examined both sides of the issue regarding the public ownership of radio. While public ownership held the potential "of further nationalizing Canada and of fostering better programs," the downside was that the federal government likely did not have "the same money to expend in hiring artists, and there was the possibility of radio hours being rented to commercial concerns."[115] Nevertheless, the Club came out "very definitely" in favor of government control of radio. The issue was resolved in 1932, by the formation of the CBC, "with a mandate to educate, to entertain and to foster Canadian nationalism."[116]

Whether or not radio broadcasts emanated from the United States, this medium provided benefits to the Canadian people. Most importantly, it broke down the isolation which previously had been "a hallmark of living in Canada."[117] Suddenly

Canadians could place themselves in immediate contact with one another and with the rest of the world, simply by turning on their radio sets. This technology was extremely important to women in the home because it provided them with what often was "their only form of entertainment."[118] Fortunately, the Edmonton radio stations made a concerted effort to befriend women, and club women in particular, by offering both to announce the dates of meetings and to broadcast information which was relevant to them. For example, both CFRN and CJCA began announcing club news in the latter 1930s. Even though Edmonton club women generally were supportive of the CBC, it still could be a source of friction for them. The Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton voiced a strong protest in 1939, when an address by one of its speakers was not broadcast over CFRN. As recommended by the royal commission of the previous decade, the CBC was entrusted with the power to regulate private broadcasts. The implications became apparent when CFRN explained to the Club that the particular address in question was not aired owing to an insufficiency in time to comply with censorship regulations. All script intended for broadcast had to be read and approved by the CBC beforehand. CFRN gave its assurance that arrangements could be made in future to broadcast lectures given to the Women's Canadian Club.[119]

In 1936, Mrs. Elsie Newland, convener of the education committee of the Women's University Club, announced that the committee was interested in pursuing the matter of better radio programs for children.[120] The committee solicited the interest of other women's clubs in the city including the Municipal Chapter of the IODE, the Women's Musical Club, and the Local Council of Women on which Mrs. Newland was the University Club's representative.[121] Mrs. Newland's letter to the Municipal Chapter explained that the University Club wished to have the Chapter's support in approaching Station CKUA in Edmonton regarding the provision of a children's program "consisting of stories, plays and music conducive to the development of good taste in these things while the interest and appreciation of the child is still in the process of being formed and susceptible to direction."[122] After putting the question to its primaries, the Municipal Chapter informed the University Club that the scheme had the full endorsement of the IODE.[123] Similarly, the Local Council of Women reported that thirteen of the fourteen clubs affiliated with it were in favor of a CKUA children's program.[124] A year later, the radio station still was unable to comply, and yet the club women would not relent. A joint meeting of women's organizations was called in July 1937, to discuss radio broadcasting. One of their recommendations was that the CBC institute a children's program over its western network. If the CBC was unable to secure "key stations" in this venture, then the clubs suggested helpfully that the program could be broadcast over CKUA.[125]

Other recommendations issued from this meeting were that a committee be appointed to express its approval or disapproval of radio programs, and that individual organizations form "listening groups" for the purpose of endorsing programs which they considered to be of "outstanding merit."[126] Satisfied that they had done all they could in making their wishes known, the Edmonton clubs determined to leave it at that. At the very least, it is a notable coincidence that the Edmonton women's organizations chose to raise the issue of children's programs at a time when the Department of Education was in the process of implementing radio education for rural and isolated schoolchildren. Many of the leaders of Edmonton organizations were socially prominent women who had close associations, often by marriage, to the top governmental officials in the province. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to surmise that these club women were in a position, not only to be informed, but to be heard on matters which were of concern to them. In this instance, it was Elsie Newland, wife of Dr. Herbert Newland, Supervisor of Schools, who initiated club women's activities toward better children's radio programs.

Education officials mirrored the Edmonton club women's apprehensions concerning the pervasive influence of new media upon the young. The revised elementary program of 1940 took, as one of its principal objectives, the provision of activities suitable for children's leisure. The Department was concise in its purpose, which was to combat "such temptations to passivity as mechanical toys, radio programmes and the silver screen."[127] Teachers were to encourage physical activity on the part of students through play, dance, and athletics. Dramatics, reading, and music also were suggested as suitable leisure activities for children.[128] It was not the Department's intention that children altogether avoid radio and motion pictures in their leisure hours; the aim was merely to present children with alternative methods of distraction.

Social reform thought gradually shifted in the early 1920s from a liberal Christian "Social Gospel" mentality to a secular humanist "social science" perspective. This transformation was accompanied by a waning of influence in the clergy's traditional role of moral leadership. It was left to club women to carry on with their unofficial responsibilities as the promoters and guardians of a moral society. The introduction of three new mediums for the dissemination of information to the public, specifically mass circulation magazines, motion pictures, and radio, tested the club women's abilities to protect society from immoral influences. American domination of these new media was perceived by club women and others as posing a serious threat to Canadian morals and culture. Members responded in several ways. They reacted to events by lodging protests, forming their own censorship groups, and supporting other censoring agencies. They promoted alternatives such as British films and local plays. They tried to bring about improvements in the quality and availability of children's radio programs and motion pictures. These attempts at moral and cultural protectionism were motivated by a desire to create a wholesome, positive environment for children. Whether or not the media could be compelled to comply, it was parental interest and involvement in their children's activities which formed the best assurances against negative moral influences. The Edmonton club women's involvement was intended to supplement this parental role.

Club women showed an interest in and a commitment to the provision of a positive social environment for children and, as well, care for children who were in need. Their voluntary efforts on behalf of neglected and dependent boys and girls were integral to the province's child-saving ventures. When it came to young offenders, certain of the clubs worked directly with the children while others chose to educate their members as to the extent of the problem and the ways in which child care experts were responding to it. Club women believed that a more effective role for them was in averting children from the path of delinquency by providing them with social and recreational opportunities that were morally uplifting and contributed to good citizenship. They also sought to compel the various media to promote these goals by offering programs for children which upheld Canadian morals and culture.

Dr. J.W. Dafoe, Editor-in-Chief of the *Winnipeg Free Press* and Chancellor of the University of Manitoba, told members of the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton that "In planning for the future the people should exercise great care in the selectivity of ideas. We can never return to the old order but we should be discriminating in what we put in its place."[129] It is reasonable to conclude that the club women of Edmonton were vigilant in this regard. Their interest in children, in all aspects of life, illustrates this point. Children required care, protection, sound education, and moral well-being. Women were the voices of conscience, striving to ensure the availability to all children of these conditions.

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[1] Cormack, Perennials and Politics, p. 101.

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[2] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Ever a Crusader": Nellie McClung, First-Wave Feminist," in Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History, eds. Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1986) pp. 185-186.

[3] Alberta Welfare Study Committee, Provincial Chapter IODE, Welfare in Alberta (Edmonton: IODE, Alberta Provincial Chapter, 1947), p. 14.

[4] Cormack, Perennials and Politics, p. 101.

[5] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 30 May 1923.

[6] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, pp. 258-259.

[7] Mrs. Marion Conroy, The Catholic Women's League: Early History and Growth in Edmonton Archdiocese, Published on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the CWL, 13 November 1962, p. 166.

[8] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 262.

[9] IODE, Welfare in Alberta, p. 13.

[10] Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children," p. 58.

[11] Ibid., pp. 58-62.

[12] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 19 January 1919 and 3 February 1919.

[13] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 14 February 1918.

[14] Ibid., Minutes of 13 May 1920.

[15] Ibid., Minutes of 10 May 1923.

[16] Ibid., Minutes of December 1925.

[17] The Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton made generous donations to charitable causes until 1922, when a member took exception to the executive's decision to grant two hundred and fifty dollars to the YWCA for a swimming pool and fifty dollars to the Red Cross. She felt that the entire sum should have gone to the Children's Aid Boarding Home. The Club debated this point for three months and finally decided that it was neither a philanthropic nor a charitable organization and that in future its surplus funds would be used to achieve the objects for which it was created: "These objects being chiefly to foster the spirit of loyalty and to promote the British and Canadian ideals for which our fathers fought and suffered and died." Source: Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 14 November 1922 and 15 February 1923.

[18] Conroy, The Catholic Women's League, pp. 5, 41-42.

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[19] Ibid., pp. 41-42.

[20] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 16 April 1923.

[21] Ibid., Minutes of 12 March 1929 and 19 May 1936.

[22] Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children," p. 7.

[23] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 18 April 1921.

[24] Ibid., Minutes of 17 May 1921.

[25] Ibid., Minutes of 8 October 1935 and 10 December 1935.

[26] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Newspaper article of 11 March 1931.

[27] Ibid., Minutes of 9 April 1931.

[28] Ibid., Minutes of 8 April 1920.

[29] Conroy, The Catholic Women's League, pp. 32-33.

[30] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 6 February 1921.

[31] Ibid., Minutes of January 1922.

[32] Winnipeg Free Press, Welfare in Alberta, pamphlet no. 17.

[33] Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children," p. 56.

[34] Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, p. 122.

[35] Ibid., p. 121.

[36] Ibid., p. 125.

[37] Coulter, "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children," p. 68.

[38] Conroy, The Catholic Women's League, p. 43.

[39] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 15 October 1923.

[40] Ibid., Minutes of 20 November 1922 and 14 June 1932.

[41] Rebecca Coulter, "The Working Young of Edmonton, 1921-1931," in Childhood and Family, p. 143.

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[42] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report of the Education Committee, 1928-29.

[43] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 14 February 1929.

[44] Ibid., Minutes of 8 March 1928.

[45] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report on the Young Offender, April 1937.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 11 May 1922.

[52] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Annual Report of the Education Committee, May 1919.

[53] Ibid., Minutes of 18 September 1924, 10 October 1925, 25 November 1925, and 12 December 1925.

[54] Ibid., Minutes of 16 October 1926, 27 October 1930, and 1 February 1932.

[55] Conroy, The Catholic Women's League, pp. 36-37.

[56] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 13 June 1932.

[57] Ibid., Minutes of 8 May 1933.

[58] Ibid., Minutes of 15 March 1932 and 13 June 1932.

[59] Ibid., Minutes of 2 September 1932 and 11 October 1932.

[60] Ibid., Minutes of 14 October 1935 and 12 November 1935.

[61] Ibid., Minutes of 13 January 1936 and 10 February 1936.

[62] Ibid., Minutes of 27 February 1939.

[63] Ibid., Minutes of 11 September 1933.

[64] Ibid, Minutes of 13 November 1913, 23 January 1917, and 12 November 1920.

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[65] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 26 May 1922, 19 July 1922, and 27 October 1922.

[66] Conroy, The Catholic Women's League, p. 27.

[67] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 16 April 1923.

[68] Ibid., Newspaper article of 19 September 1923.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 11 January 1937.

[72] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 19 September 1923.

[73] See, for example, Bonnie MacQueen, "Domesticity and Discipline: The Girl Guides in British Columbia, 1910-1943," in Not Just Pin Money, p. 221.

[74] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 19 September 1923.

[75] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of April 1937.

[76] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 27 October 1922 and 1 December 1922.

[77] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 160.

[78] Nancy M. Sheehan, "The Junior Red Cross Movement in Saskatchewan, 1919-1929: Rural Improvement Through the Schools," in Building Beyond the Homestead: Rural History on the Prairies, eds. David C. Jones and Ian MacPherson (Calgary: The University of Calgary Press, 1985), p. 80.

[79] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 160.

[80] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 160 and Sheehan, "The Junior Red Cross Movement," p. 80.

[81] Cook, The Regenerators, p. 4.

[82] Ibid., p. 230.

[83] Ibid., p. 231.

[84] Ibid., p. 198.

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[85] Paul Voisey, "The 'Votes for Women' Movement," Alberta History (Summer 1975): 13-14.

[86] Quoted in Voisey, "The 'Votes for Women' Movement," p. 18.

[87] Voisey, "The 'Votes for Women' Movement," p. 22.

[88] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 59.

[89] Ibid., pp. 183-184.

[90] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 25 April 1921.

[91] Quoted in Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 184.

[92] Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, Minutes of 6 April 1926.

[93] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 184.

[94] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 217.

[95] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 8 February 1913 and March 1913.

[96] Ibid., Minutes of 27 April 1917.

[97] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 175.

[98] Ibid., p. 177.

[99] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 21 May 1919.

[100] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 5 December 1932 and 9 January 1933.

[101] Ibid., Minutes of 15 March 1938.

[102] Ibid., Minutes of 12 February 1934.

[103] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 177.

[104] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 8 September 1936.

[105] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 9 December 1933 and Report of the Education Committee 1933-34.

[106] Ibid., "Survey of the Present Position of Films for Children, Educational and Otherwise," May 1934.

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[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 176.

[112] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 180 and Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 157.

[113] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 182.

[114] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 157.

[115] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 12 March 1932.

[116] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 157.

[117] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 216.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 6 October 1939.

[120] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 8 January 1936.

[121] Ibid., Minutes of 24 March 1936.

[122] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 9 March 1936.

[123] Ibid., Minutes of 11 May 1936.

[124] Women's University Club of Edmonton, 4 April 1936.

[125] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 7 July 1937.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Programme of Studies for the Elementary School 1940, p. 7.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 16 May 1934.

CHAPTER VI

EDMONTON CLUB WOMEN'S INTEREST IN EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

Each of the six Edmonton women's organizations represented in this study was involved in an important aspect of informal adult education. In this they were not alone since "adult education became a major growth area during the inter-war period."[1] From their inception women's clubs were intended to offer their members a valuable means of learning and of being conversant with issues of particular interest to women. Apart from the opportunities for social interaction and for facilitating change within society, clubs made it possible for women to broaden their own educational experiences at a time when their years of formal schooling were behind them. As programs of study, subjects for committee work, and lecture topics were identified and examined, women of these organizations gained valuable information and insight which afforded them a richer basis for fulfilling their roles as mothers and, increasingly, as voices supporting the improvement of conditions for children. Even though the topics of study often had no direct relevance to children, the touching on world politics, immigration policy, history and literature, they nevertheless were of consequence to the development of these women. From such self developmental involvements they gained a broadening of perspective which was vital to the role they increasingly were playing in the society.

As they took more visible part in activities of influencing and electing public officials and as they sought to have their values and views recognized as essential elements of sound policy, they needed the benefits available through the learning sponsored by their organizations.

Adult Education in a Democratic Society

The new education movement and the progressive reforms which grew out of it in the latter 1930s were conceived principally for the benefit of children participating in the school experience. Reformers sought to transform the purpose and function of schools so that they became humane, child-centered institutions that were "more responsive to the way in which children grew, and at the same time more practical and more relevant, teaching skills needed in the workplace."[2] Yet there was another aspect to the new education which was applicable to the adult members of women's organizations, it was self-education. Sir Michael Sadler, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, drew this connection when he addressed the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton on the message of the new education. One hundred and fifty Club members were present for his address as well as certain of the province's educational leaders including the Hon. Perren Baker, Minister of Education, and Dr. Tory, President of the University of Alberta.

According to Sir Michael self-education, "the education one gains after school and college life," was the most significant component of an individual's education.[3] Through exposing oneself to "new ideas in books, new sounds in music, new revelations in art and science," one avoided intellectual stagnation and attained the knowledge necessary to challenge existing conditions.[4] Sir Michael's pronouncements were a reaffirmation of Edmonton club women's traditional pursuit of self-education within their organizations.

There were numerous issues about which club women chose to inform themselves. Previous chapters have indicated members' interest in children in terms of education and schooling, and children's health and welfare. Although child-related issues were one of the principal concerns of club women, they did devote considerable time to examining adult-oriented topics such as literature, history, politics, the economy, labor, and world affairs. These interests were not confined to urban club women, members of rural organizations such as the Women's Institutes and the United Farm Women of Alberta pursued similar interests.[5] Many of the Edmonton organizations made conscious efforts to share their findings with other women and with the public. For example, the constitution of the Edmonton Home Economics Association stated specifically that the Association would aim to advance its purpose through professional and popular publications so "that knowledge may be increased and especially that public opinion may be guided."[6] Similarly, the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton sought, in the words of its president, "the cultivating of an informed public opinion on important questions."[7]

The Women's University Club of Edmonton first invited the public to participate in its educational ventures in 1913, after the Club had approached Dr. Tory, President of the University of Alberta, concerning arrangements for a series of scholarly lectures on the history of architecture. The Club was informed that the University would arrange for these lectures on the condition that the general public be allowed to attend, since "as a State institution the University cannot give a series of lectures to any special society or group of individuals exclusively."[8] These terms, to which the Club readily agreed, set a precedent for the many future lectures which professors from the University of Alberta delivered to the Women's University Club. Some of the Edmonton organizations had huge memberships, those of the Women's Canadian Club and the Catholic Women's League numbered in the hundreds. For this reason, any addresses which these organizations sponsored reached many women, whether or not the public was formally invited to attend. Additionally, the local newspapers, and in later years radio stations, reported the salient points of some speakers' addresses.

Politicians frequently delivered speeches on the pressing issues of the day to the Edmonton organizations. In January 1920, Alberta's Premier Stewart appealed to the Women's Canadian Club for a more sympathetic interest in the labor question. Contrary to popular sentiments, labor's demands for higher wages was not responsible for the current escalation in the cost of living, "we sometimes forget that those who labor are experiencing the same difficulty in getting a livelihood that we are."[9] The Premier suggested that rather than censuring labor, middle class women should endeavor to understand its difficulties and help to solve them. The Club was offered a different perspective on the labor question in 1923, by the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen. Known for stating his positions with "stark clarity and unapologetic dogmatism," Meighen explained that the present economic conditions, that is, the deflation in the prices of primary and manufactured products, were "the result of world wide organization in certain spheres of life, especially in that of labor," any other causes were "local and incidental."[10]

Trade, coupled with anti-American sentiment, was a favorite issue of politicians speaking to women's organizations in the 1920s. UFA Premier J.E. Brownlee pointed out to the Women's Canadian Club in 1927, that most of Canada's trade and commerce was carried on with the United States, and that Canada could remedy this situation through building up her trade relationships within the empire. Canada might also try developing her resources from within the empire, since at least seventy-five per cent of the money invested in Canadian resources at that time was American. In fact, the United States dominated Canadian pulpwood, oil, and mineral resources, and if this trend was allowed to continue unabated it was "bound to have a far-reaching effect."[11] Edmonton organizations were willing to act on behalf of the Canadian cause. The

Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE called for federal protection against the dumping of American surplus products because the practice threatened "extinction of many branches of our 'Industries'."[12] When the Alberta Trade Commissioner asked the Municipal Chapter to endorse a "Canadian Coal for Canadians" campaign, the Chapter not only agreed, it had the Provincial Chapter circularize every primary and municipal chapter in the province in order to request that they too issue endorsements.[13]

Another of the many issues which politicians saw fit to address concerned the way in which women could cast "thinking ballots." The new Conservative opposition leader R.B. Bennett, spoke to this issue in his 1928 address to the Women's Canadian Club. He exposed what had been the underlying fear among politicians ever since women had attained the right to vote, it was that they would upset male-dominated politics by launching a "massive women's vote."[14] Bennett felt that "it was of little point for women to get together as a mass and take certain steps because women's interests were affected," they should know that there were interests much greater than their own. His hope was that when women cast their ballots, they adhered to "the ideals which had inspired the Fathers of Confederation to bring into being the unity of this dominion."[15]

The peace movement, which had been initiated in the aftermath of the First World War, continued to draw the interest and support of women in Edmonton organizations during the Depression years. In the early 1930s, various primaries under the Municipal Chapter of the IODE studied the League of Nations Society, which was a Canadian national organization established in 1921 to support the League of Nations in Geneva.[16] Irene Parlby also spoke to the Municipal Chapter, the Women's University Club, and the Women's Canadian Club over the course of the decade in an effort to engender commitment to the League of Nations Society. Club women were among those anxious to avoid a reenactment of global conflict, and disarmament was seen to be the most viable precaution. Agnes Macphail, M.P., had served as a Canadian delegate on the League of Nations Disarmament Committee in 1929. She addressed the Women's Canadian Club in 1931, on the issue of delegate selection to the forthcoming Disarmament Conference to be held in Geneva in February of the following year. Macphail urged Club members to join in petitioning Prime Minister Bennett to select delegates who were in favor of international disarmament.[17] The Club responded by forwarding a resolution to Ottawa which urged the prime minister to appoint delegates who were "known by their public utterances to believe in the possibility of World Disarmament by agreement among the nations."[18]

The uncertainty of the Great Depression motivated club women to study world affairs even more closely than they had during the previous decade. The issue of world peace often was intertwined with other topics. When Japan invaded China's Manchuria in the early 1930s, club women were among those interested in the implications this aggression might have on Canada's trade with Japan. The Hon. Vincent Massey, a diplomat who had chaired the Canadian delegation at the Pacific Relations Conference in Shanghai, discussed the "Manchurian Crisis" when he was a guest of the Women's Canadian Club in 1932. Massey "blasted the popular belief that the far east crisis is assisting or will assist Canadian trade"; in his view Japan's struggle would result in a loss of its purchasing power.[19] Massey lamented the League of Nations' action in demanding that the Japanese withdraw its troops, since it had had the unintended consequence of consolidating public opinion in Japan "behind the war party."[20] In fact, in the following year, Japan announced that it would withdraw from the League of Nations by 1935. When another member of the Pacific Relations Conference, Dr. Macintosh Bell, addressed the Club on the "Manchurian Problem," he suggested that Canadians might better understand conditions if they developed closer cultural relations with the Orient.[21] The Club responded by inviting speakers to discuss "The Changed

Women in Changing China," and "Customs and Manners of the Japanese Women of To-day."[22]

The question of Britain terminating its occupation of India was another issue which claimed world attention and was examined by women's organizations in the Depression years. Several guests of the Women's Canadian Club addressed this topic under the headings "Great Britain in India," "India-Past and Present," and "The Round Table Conference?" Sir Henry Lawrence, a spokesman for the British Raj. and a former governor of Bombay, spoke to the Club in 1932, shortly after Mahatma Gandhi had initiated his campaign of civil disobedience which was intended to lead to social reform and free India from British rule. Gandhi had been imprisoned at this point. According to Lawrence, Britain intended to grant self-government to India "on a basis similar to that in Canada."[23] Autonomy was to be vested in each province as it became capable of self-government, and eventually a central parliament was to be established. The major difficulty which existed at that moment was the strife between the Hindu and Moslem peoples: "The Moslem element stands for equality while the Hindu builds up caste, stands for privilege and denies equality of opportunity."[24] "Gandhi with his gospel of love would expel every Englishman from the country," and in Lawrence's opinion, Britain was anxious to hand over control.[25] The fear was that if they left too quickly, India would erupt into civil war.

On 30 January 1933, Adolph Hitler came to power as chancellor of Germany; his dictatorship lasted twelve years. Economic unrest coupled with a rising tide of German nationalism created a general anxiety over the prospects for peace in Europe. In February 1934, Don Mario Colonna, Duc di Rignano and son of Prince Colonna, described to the Women's Canadian Club the organization of Italy as a "co-operative state" under the dictatorship of Benito Mussolini. When asked why Italy was building up a powerful navy, Don Mario explained, "We don't want to fight anybody. Get that out of your head."[26] The purpose of the enlarged fleet was to protect the country's extensive coastline. When asked to explain the dangers of Germany's current policies, Don Mario would say only that "Germany is a bit of a 'dark horse' at the present time. We really don't know what Hitlerism is."[27] By 1935, when Magistrate H.G. Scott of Calgary addressed the Club, a clearer view was emerging with respect to Germany's intentions. Scott explained that Germany's "passionate resentment at defeat" in the World War had not been allayed; the country was determined to "regain her lost possessions and pride, at any cost."[28] Under Hitler's direction, the young men of Germany had been imbued with "a new sense of purpose and self-sacrifice," the army was being rebuilt, and the press had been "completely muzzled." A crisis situation had been reached and the only way that Germany would now remain peaceful was if "she is faced by resolute nations adequately armed."[29] After 3 September 1939, when Britain and France declared war on Germany, nearly every Edmonton women's organization in this study examined the hostilities and participated in the war effort.[30]

Club women's ongoing examination of global affairs represented one aspect of their activites in the realm of self-education. Since these women lived in an age of newspapers and radio, it is reasonable to surmise that information on national and world events was readily available to them, yet they chose to delve more deeply into topics through conducting their own research and by eliciting the viewpoints of speakers who were acquainted with the events. In the 1920s, they had politicians address trade and labor issues and give their opinions on how women should participate in the political process; in the 1930s, speakers were invited to discuss the peace initiatives of the League of Nations, trade prospects with the Orient which had been colored by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, civil unrest in India and the mounting campaign to have the British Raj. withdraw, and whether or not Germany was preparing for war. The global events of the Depression era served to heighten public awareness of the ever increasing threats to world peace and the democratic way of life.

Other areas in which club women sought to extend their knowledge included literature and history. All the organizations were involved in these studies to some extent. The Edmonton Home Economics Association had university professors provide literary readings, the education committee reviewed new literature in the field of home economics each year, and from time to time the Association compiled provincial, national, and North American histories of the home economics movement. The Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club often invited female writers and magazine editors to discuss their craft; in 1916 the Club produced its own publication entitled *Club Women's Records,* and members began working on another publication in the fall of 1922. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League heard addresses on the histories of various countries and on Canadian writers, while the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE conducted its own study on the history of the British Empire. The Women's University Club of Edmonton devoted a considerable portion of its time to the study of literature and history. One year they examined English prose and journalism and had two study groups on Thomas Hardy, another year they chose fiction magazines and contemporary poetry, in the mid-1920s they studied Alberta's history, and in 1930 they agreed upon a Canadian theme of art, prose, poetry, and music. Literature and history were popular subjects among women because they could pursue these studies on their own, through reading, and then discuss what they had learned during club meetings or in study groups.

Club women appeared to enjoy contemplating others' perceptions of women's role in society. Several organizations invited speakers to address this issue. Emma Goldman, addressing the Canadian Women's Press Club in 1927, suggested that women's role was to solve the great problems of the day in labor, education, and the rising generation of young people.[31] A female teacher from one of the city's local high schools told the Edmonton Home Economics Association in 1933, that the challenge to women was to "open unprejudiced minds" to the cause of alleviating the present condition of "starvation in the midst of plenty."[32] In 1936, Charlotte Whitton, head of the Social Service Council of Canada, assured members of the Women's University Club that women had a place in the nation's welfare program.[33] Miss Mary Dingman, industrial secretary of the world council of the YWCA, speaking to the Women's Canadian Club in 1935 on "The Status of Women and It's Implications for Today," took note of the position of women in several countries. In Italy and Germany, the Fascist and Nazi governments were in the process of removing women's rights altogether, whereas women in Turkey, Brazil, and Russia had recently been granted equal status. Miss Dingman denounced the popular conception that the unemployment problem was caused by the increasing numbers of women working, "sending women home because they are filling jobs that men might have, is no solution to the economic problem."[34] The difficulty was to be found in the whole social system, and it was here that club women might make a contribution. Through networking local organizations into international affiliations, club women had the opportunity to affect a worldwide progressive movement which could raise the level of living in the industrial and social order.[35]

The role which others set for women was exceedingly ambitious. They were to solve all the great problems of the day be they social, economic, or industrial, yet women were to accomplish these tasks without real political power. Although women had won the right to vote, few of them ran for and attained political office. This was because they had been effectively shut out of the process. The trend in the inter-war years, and beyond, was for parties to choose female candidates as "sacrificial lambs in seats they had no hope of winning."[36] Women were fully aware of this trend. Agnes Macphail, who was the only female Member of Parliament until 1935, answered the question put to her by a Women's Canadian Club member as to why more women had not followed in her footsteps. Her response was that "none of them get a nomination that is worth a run."[37] Even when women did manage to get elected, they still were not given an opportunity to wield real power. Although Irene Parlby served for fourteen years as a cabinet minister in the UFA administration, her title never proceeded beyond Minister Without Portfolio. However, women did have a powerful instrument in clubs. By educating themselves on the pressing issues of the day, and then putting their knowledge to work in bringing about reforms, either through their own actions or by lobbying governments, women became an effective force for change in society. The example of women's organizations demonstrated that it was possible for women to exert power outside male dominated electoral politics.

Through the process of self-education club women were able to enhance their understanding on a myriad of topics including literature, history, politics, the economy, labor, and world affairs. Often they shared their knowledge with the public so that greater numbers might benefit from their findings. Club women also were active in teaching other adults. The Women's University Club began doing this on a voluntary basis in 1914, when it agreed to provide four or five lectures for a series of open meetings sponsored by the YWCA.[38] The Edmonton Home Economics Association was one of the organizations most active in this work during the inter-war period. Sometimes their teaching was informal, as in demonstrations at local stores or, in the case of the Association's clothing committee in the 1920s, articles in local newspapers and magazines on the subjects of fabric tests, art in dress, the history of weaving and spinning, and the effect of machinery on clothing.[39] On a more formal basis, the Association wrote and administered correspondence courses for the Women's Institutes of Alberta. It also taught classes to select groups. In the Depression years members voluntarily offered nutrition classes for the Women's Auxiliary to the Unemployed Men's Association, and during the Second World War they offered classes in nutrition to expectant mothers and the wives of army privates.[40] By donating their time on an unpaid, voluntary basis, club women were able to extend the benefits of adult education to individuals who likely would have been unable to pay for the service.

Albertan's interest in adult education rose dramatically in the latter 1930s. A report, issued in 1935 by a legislative committee into rural education, recommended that adult education be fostered in the province by means of grants for libraries in rural communities.[41] The Women's University Club had begun its own investigations the year previously when it wrote to the British Institute for Adult Education asking for information on the movement in England.[42] In 1936, the Edmonton Local Council of Women determined to petition the provincial government to "establish schools for Adult Education on the pattern of the Scandinavian Folk Schools."[43] The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League was another organization that was interested in adult education. In his addresses to the Subdivision's annual meetings in 1937 and 1939, Archbishop Macdonald elected to discuss "the importance of adult education today."[44]

In 1937, the Women's University Club produced a comprehensive report on the history and philosophy of adult education, the movement in Canada, and the future prospects for adult education in Alberta. The report noted the founding of the Canadian Association for Adult Education in 1934, and the fact that its current director was Mr. E.A. Corbett of the Extension Department of the University of Alberta. The purpose behind the Association was to provide a "definite means of inter-communication and a forum for the discussion of the common problems" confronted by "those who have been engaged for years in Adult Education."[45] University Extension lectures and courses were the most widespread form of adult education in Canada, and the National Council of Education also was involved in the field but, as the report acknowledged, there were several groups which catered specifically to women's education. These were women's organizations including the Women's Institutes "organized to supply an Educational and Social bond among the rural women," religious clubs "important among these being the YWCA," Women's Musical Clubs, the Labor Women's Federation, the Women's Canadian Club, the IODE, "and many others which you all know."[46]

In a section of the report entitled *"A Future Untold. Adult Education in Alberta,"* was a list of the various organizations providing adult education services in the province. It began with "about the only branch of the Dominion Government which is in any way engaged in Adult Education in the province," which was the Department of Agriculture.[47] Its system of experimental farms and illustration stations meant that a considerable amount of educational work could be carried out. For example, each year short courses and field days were sponsored by experimental farms such as the Lacombe Experimental Station. They were largely attended by male and female farmers. The Provincial Department of Agriculture also carried out educational work through its trained staff of district agriculturalists who gave lectures, short courses, and personal advice to farmers, and through its two schools of agriculture located in Olds and Vermilion. As to be expected, the Department of Education was involved in adult education through its Summer School for Teachers, school and music festivals organized in different centers around the province, correspondence courses, technical schools, and school fairs which were "mainly organized for children," but "have a wonderfully stimulating effect on adults and much valuable educational work has been indirectly accomplished by the object lessons provided through community fairs."[48]

The Provincial Department of Health was another agency recognized as being involved in adult education. It employed one man full-time to travel the province providing lectures, exhibits, and films on health education to schoolchildren, parent-teacher groups, church gatherings, and women's organizations. In addition to their actual nursing duties, the public health nurses were expected to give lectures and demonstrations in their communities. The University's Department of Extension, organized in 1912 "with one lecturer and a librarian," was "one of the pioneer institutions in the field of Adult Education in Canada."[49] Its services included lectures which were given throughout Alberta on "such subjects as literature, history, travel, child welfare, economics, educational psychology, philosophy and practical agriculture," as well as lectures, discussions, and debates which were broadcast over the university radio station, CKUA.[50] Public libraries also were cited as having "an almost indispensable part in Adult Education"; Alberta had twenty-four of them in 1935.[51] Yet even though these other agencies had entered the field of adult education, the Women's University Club report acknowledged that women's organizations were the educational avenue most widely available to both rural and urban women.

The adult education movement continued to gather momentum into the early 1940s. A report issued by the Home and Schools Association in 1942, described its work as "one phase of adult education," with the expressed objectives being: "(i) welfare of the child; (ii) improved environment; (iii) better parenthood; (iv) knowledge about education and appreciation of new trends in education; and (v) co-operation of parents and teachers for the benefit of the children."[52]

Dr. Herbert Newland, Supervisor of Schools with the Department of Education, believed that adult education had to take the form of "re-education" in order to bring people in step with "rapid and extensive social changes."[53] He wished to see adult education established at the community level, possibly through the schools, but the idea still was at the "problem stage of development." For example, the war-related teacher shortage made the possibility of finding teachers for adult education courses rather difficult, and there was the question of whether or not it was feasible to keep schools in operation for extended hours each day. Cost was another issue, would fees be charged or would the system be supported through taxes? Finally, who would control adult education, universities, provincial school systems, or local communities?[54]

Newland's views provided for connecting adult education activities into what he referred to as the "total" educational needs of a democratic society. He saw adult education as a form of re-education designed to assist people in keeping pace with change. In the early 1920s, Sir Michael Sadler in presenting adult self-education as a method by which to avoid intellectual stagnation and challenge existing conditions, expressed much the same view. Women's organizations reflected such a viewpoint in their activities. They sought to be conversant with emergent ideas and to be well informed, especially on child and family related concerns of society. The knowledge which club women gained through their informal adult education actually empowered them to influence and occasionally precipitate reform or change.

In 1943, at the behest of the Minister of Education, representatives of at least thirty Alberta organizations gathered to form the Alberta Adult Education Association. Community adult education centers were rapidly established in eighteen centers throughout the province.[55] The movement seemed destined for success. Women's organizations immediately were interested in joining. The president of the Medicine Hat Women's University Club became a representative on that city's local adult education council in 1943, and in the following year the Edmonton, Calgary, and Medicine Hat branches became affiliated with the Provincial Adult Education Council.[56] However, "with a change of ministers, the movement fell apart," and adult education was "left to the initiative of local organizations."[57]

Adult Vocational Training

Edmonton club women were closely associated with the vocational aspect of adult education. Their initial interest stemmed from their own inquiries into the vocations that were open to women in the province as well as their investigations into the working conditions of women employed in certain industries. The Women's University Club and the Edmonton Home Economics Association examined both of these issues in the early 1920s. As unemployment rates mounted, club members intensified their response by assuming a role of active participation in vocational training, especially among women. No minimum age requirement was attached to "adult" vocational training. Many of the beneficiaries were youth who had finished with, but not necessarily completed, their elementary or secondary schooling and were attempting to enter the work-force.

Unemployment was one of the most pressing concerns of the Depression years. Numerous groups vied for special consideration in the fierce competition for the few jobs that became available. The popular feeling was that employment should go first to men with family responsibilities. Soldiers who had fought for and defended their country had an additional advantage. Many young people remained in school in an attempt to defer the problem of job placement. Others simply had to find work either to supplement the family wage or to maintain themselves. Some felt that youth, like men, deserved special consideration. The arguement was that society owed the young the opportunity to take their rightful place as self-supporting, contributing members. It was women who had the most tenuous claim to a place in the work-force. The underlying suspicion was that they did not really need to work, that if they stayed home more jobs would be available to men and young people. The Edmonton club women were among the few who attempted to locate employment for women.

The Women's University Club formed a committee in 1931 for the purpose of assisting female students from the University of Alberta in finding employment for the summer months. Letters were written to business firms, government institutions, government offices, tea rooms, hotels, mountain resorts, and fruit packers, indicating that students' services were available, and that without summer jobs, many students would be unable to resume their studies in the fall. Whenever possible, committee members followed their letters with personal visits to the firms. In the first year, the committee found approximately ten full-time placements and "part work for a number of girls."[58] The University appointed its own student placement officer in 1932, but rather than duplicate effort, he left the work of finding jobs for female students to the Club's committee.[59] Student employment was not the only concern of the Women's University Club. For a time it pursued the idea of organizing a school for unemployed women, and a letter of inquiry was sent to an English school for the unemployed, but no further action was taken.[60]

Vocational training was an effective solution to massive unemployment. Edmonton club members attempted to aid unemployed women through providing vocational training for them in domestic service. The problem was that domestic service was not a preferred occupation among Canadian-born women. Disadvantages included low wages, extremely long hours of work with little time off, a lack of freedom and privacy, unending loneliness and isolation, and possibly even sexual exploitation.[61] It was regarded by working class people as a degrading, low prestige job, "closest to prostitution in the social scale of female occupations."[62] In fact, domestics who were unable to find positions often became prostitutes. Yet despite these many shortcomings, domestic service was the most widespread occupation among women at the turn-of-the-century, accounting for forty-one per cent of the female work-force. By 1921, domestic service had dropped to the second most common employment for women, at eighteen per cent of the female work-force, but it remained a major women's occupation until the Second World War.[63]

Domestics originated from a variety of circumstances. They were immigrant women from Britain and continental Europe, rural women, single mothers and widows with children, older maiden women, former prostitutes and prison inmates, orphan and underprivileged girls, and women whose husbands were out of work.[64] They were employed by wealthy, upper class women, by the wives of professionals and businessmen, and by female farmers. The introduction of labor-saving devices into urban homes did not reduce demands on the part of middle class women for domestic servants. If anything, the growing affluence of this class meant that its members were more able to afford domestic help. Women's increasing accountability in child-rearing, the higher standards set for them in home care and cleanliness, and their persistent involvement in clubs, church groups, and other activities outside the home, made the services of domestics integral to maintaining their middle class way of life.[65]

Domestic servants were in fierce demand in the 1920s. An estimated eighty thousand domestics emigrated from Britain over the course of the decade, and even so, these numbers had to be supplemented with immigrants recruited from continental Europe.[66] However, the era of domestic immigration ended with the onset of the Depression.[67] Serious unemployment among shop clerks, clerical staff, and factory workers meant that domestic positions became acceptable to Canadian-born women. The occupation became even more desirable with the trend away from live-in situations to daytime household employment. Many of the former disadvantages to domestic service, the sixteen to eighteen hour days, and the lack of freedom and privacy, were lessened when a domestic maintained a separate residence and a life apart from that of her employer. Since Edmonton club members were among the prospective employers of domestics, their involvement in training women for this vocation might be viewed as rather self-serving. Yet there can be no doubt that unemployed women, desperate for work, would have viewed the overtures with some appreciation, and others in society would have gained a measure of satisfaction in knowing that these women would not be competing for the jobs that men wanted.

Owing to its professional qualifications in matters pertaining to the home, the Edmonton Home Economics Association was the organization that actually instructed women's courses in domestic service, but it did so in conjunction with other Edmonton women's groups. For example, in 1936, the YWCA operated a program for "Household Workers" which members of the Home Economics Association agreed to instruct. One of the issues raised in the first year concerned problems which commonly arose between housewives and housemaids. The instructors dealt with this issue through an experiment in which the entire class went into a home "to get practical experience."[68] Members of the Association instructed further classes for the YWCA in 1937.[69] But the most ambitious educational program for domestic servants was carried out between 1937 and 1940, under the auspices of the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Program. Governments supplied the funds for the program, the Catholic Women's League provided the facility, the Edmonton Home Economics Association instructed, and representatives of the Women's Canadian Club and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE served on the co-ordinating committee.

The Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Program was a joint venture intended "for the rehabilitation of unemployed youth."[70] Costs were shared on a fifty-fifty basis between the Province and the Dominion, with the Deputy Minister of Education, G. Fred McNally, assuming the role as general chairman. Several projects were organized. One was designed for the "restoration of morale, provision of social contacts, physical re-conditioning and training in various phases of farm life and home-craft" for rural youth.[71] In the first year, a total of twenty-seven short courses, of two-weeks duration, were held throughout rural Alberta; two thousand, seven hundred and five youth attended. A second project involved the establishment of forestry camps intended to train young men in the rudiments of conservation, forest protection, and fire prevention; the camp courses were of seven months duration. A third project was designed specifically for farm boys from the drought areas of the province. Courses for them were provided at the Provincial Schools of Agriculture. A fourth project consisted of occupational training with guidance, observation, and on-the-job experience. The outbreak of war in 1939, led to the establishment of another project, a training center for aircraft mechanics at the Institute of Applied Art in Calgary. Two hundred men were admitted, and as rapidly as they completed their training they were absorbed into the aircraft industry.[72]

Home service training projects were initiated in Calgary and Edmonton. Each program was of three months duration, and it was made clear at the outset that only "a good type of young woman was recruited," so that "no difficulty" was experienced in placing the graduates.[73] In Edmonton, the project operated out of the Sisters of Service Hostel, which had been financed by the Catholic Women's League since it opened in 1929. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL was a major contributor to the Hostel; of the total one thousand three hundred and sixty-seven dollars raised for its first year of operation, the Senior Subdivision contributed one thousand one hundred and seventy-three dollars.[74] The Hostel was intended originally for immigrant women who came to Edmonton to find placements as domestic servants, and League women were expected to locate positions for them. The Sisters' mandate was to look after the welfare of the "unprotected girl" and ensure that Edmonton's "bright lights" did not lure her into the "white slave traffic."[75] Archbishop O'Leary was good enough to suggest that the Sisters' young charges might serve as satisfactory marriage material for single immigrant men; in his words, "If we do not bring in the domestics, where are they going to get wives later on?"[76]

Prior to the introduction of the Dominion-Provincial program, women at the Hostel received no formal training in domestic service. The program that did emerge in 1937, was a composite of the ideas generated in committee by representatives of Edmonton women's organizations. Their input was important because club women were one of the principal employers of domestics. In accordance with their wishes, it was decided that the classes would "be held in several branches of home services," and that there would be an opportunity for specialization.[77] After the first year, the Edmonton Home Economics Association wrote to the federal Minister of Labor and to Dr. McNally, who chaired the entire youth training program for the province, expressing the "real interest of the clubs" in the domestic service program and "asking that the work be continued."[78] In 1940, through the co-operation of the provincial government, the Dominion launched a War Emergency Training Program. The organization which had been carrying on the Youth Training Program was issued the new mandate of training men for war industry.[79]

Club women's most extensive involvement in vocational education centered around the training of adult women as domestics and the promotion of domestic science courses for schoolgirls. Such activities, particularly those on behalf of unemployed women, were an outward manifestation of club members' commitment to improving the welfare of disadvantaged groups within Alberta society. The Department of Education did manage to make additional, limited headway in vocational training during the inter-war period. Curricula revisions in the early 1920s resulted in the introduction of "wider choices of subjects for students not destined for professional training," and a new secondary school multi-diploma intended "to cater to the more practically-oriented student."[80] The passage of the Dominion Technical Education Act in 1919 made possible the provision of two technical high schools, the first opened in Edmonton in 1919 and the second in Calgary in 1929.[81] Both schools featured a combined academic and technical program of three years duration. The financial difficulties of the Depression years curtailed further development of technical schools, even though the Department was aware of a growing demand for this type of education.[82] By 1935, vocational instruction still was unavailable to rural youth.[83]

The reforms of the latter 1930s featured a "vocational thrust," but at least at the intermediate school level this new feature was not to be the primary ingredient of a student's education. The intermediate program sought not to segregate or stream its students. The core curriculum consisted of the traditional subjects, (English, mathematics, general science, and health and physical education), which were compulsory for all students. It was in the choice of elective courses that a student might explore potential vocational interests.[84] In this way a student's education was not prematurely restricted to training for an occupation. The effort to avoid a competency approach to education was especially significant, in view of the fact that despite increasing school enrollments, the majority of students in this period did not proceed beyond the intermediate grade level. Vocational education became more evident in the high school grades, with the introduction of a range of commercial and technical electives. Yet even here, only one diploma was issued, no matter whether a student had completed an academic, commercial, technical, or general route.

Canadianizing the Adult Foreigner

The largest infusion of immigrants into the western Canadian prairies occurred between 1897 and 1913 and was comprised, in roughly "equal parts," of Canadian, British, American, and continental European peoples.[85] With the onset of World War I in 1914, immigration essentially ceased. In the early 1920s, those who immigrated to Alberta were few in number and predominantly British, consequently, there was little public debate over the immigration question. Alberta newspapers, for example, seldom felt called upon to editorialize on the subject.[86] The situation altered considerably in 1925, when Mackenzie King's government entered into an agreement whereby the CNR and CPR were permitted to recruit immigrant farmers from central and eastern Europe. Opposition to the scheme grew when it was realized that although the period was one of economic prosperity, "the tide of immigrants was simply too great to be absorbed easily into the Canadian economy."[87] Alberta alone made way for thirty-five thousand continental Europeans during the 1920s, and most of them arrived after 1925.[88] In 1930, Prime Minister Bennett cancelled the Railways Agreement and the country became virtually closed to immigration over the next decade.[89]

Albertans tended to hold fairly negative views of immigrants, particularly of those who had arrived from continental Europe. The underlying problem was one of fear. Albertans of Anglo-Saxon origin absolutely dreaded the foreign-born. Mrs. Arthur Murphy addressed this problem in 1912, at the inaugural luncheon of the

Women's Canadian Club. In her view, the task of educating foreign peoples to become useful and loyal citizens was overwhelming: "As we stare upon them with wonder-wide eyes and consider the environment from which they have come, their ignorance, their dull unawakened minds, and their ingrained prejudice, it is not to be wondered that our hearts fail us for fear, and that the task of welding this rude conglomerate mass into a disciplined and coherent whole seems a well nigh Titanic task."[90]

Such views of the foreign-born did not alter measurably in the inter-war period. Mrs. Murphy was called upon to deliver that same speech in 1929, and the Club membership considered her views to be as timely and as relevant then as they had been in 1912. There was the accompanying suspicion that "unintelligent" foreigners would be unable to grasp the complexities of the "higher" Anglo-Saxon culture, and especially that they would misuse the vote. Mrs. Murphy, writing in 1916 as a member of the Press Club, related the incident of a foreigner in the province who had written home to Italy with the message: "Come to Canada all of you, they give you a vote out here, and then give you $2.00 for it."[91] There also was the fear that foreigners' unhygienic habits posed a health risk to all. In a publication issued by the Provincial Board of Health in 1919, it was suggested that the recent outbreak of cases of influenza had reached epidemic proportions because of the deplorable living conditions among people of foreign birth. The writer pointed out that it was unfortunate the foreigner, "particularly the one who comes from parts of Europe where he has been accustomed to insanitary living conditions, should be permitted to continue similar habits in this country."[92]

Anti-foreign sentiment rose sharply as a result of the influx of large numbers of immigrants permitted to enter the country under the terms of the Railways Agreement of 1925. Although Albertans always had demonstrated a preference for British immigrants, even they began to fall into disfavor in the latter twenties. British representatives, including a Secretary of State and a High Commissioner, defended

Britain's emigration policy, arguing that it was "not intended primarily for its monetary advantages to the British Isles, but more for the benefit of the empire as a whole."[93] Evidently the "mother country" made it her policy only "to send out men and women who temperamentally and physically are able to make a success in the country."[94] It was Canada's responsibility to welcome these newcomers, make them feel that they were "coming among friends, that Canada from the first day is going to be a real home."[95] These sentiments notwithstanding, Albertans were even less pleased at the prospect of welcoming other immigrant groups. The Department of Education reflected this surly mood when, in 1929, prospective teachers who spoke "with a foreign accent" were advised to choose some other line of work "where such a handicap will not affect their usefulness."[96] Mrs. Murphy summed up the sentiments of the day in a forthright manner. If Canada was to be "kept safe for democracy," and the Anglo-Saxon was "to retain political dominance," then only people of a "British nation building, pioneering type" should be permitted to enter the country.[97]

Edmonton club members supported a policy of Canadianizing and assimilating immigrants into mainstream, Anglo-Saxon ways. While club women were concerned about the welfare of immigrants, and were willing to render them aid, they certainly were not interested in actually mingling with immigrants or in having them join the Edmonton organizations. The Women's Canadian Club and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE were groups designed specifically to foster patriotism, but only women who were British subjects were eligible to belong. Even American women were barred from membership by this restriction. Such exclusionary tactics did little to foster patriotism among those who were not of British descent. The effect was rather to organize members into a united, impenetrable front against foreign influences. The Senior Subdivision of the CWL was the Edmonton club that did the most in the way of interacting with the foreign-born. Its membership was open to all Catholic women in the city. Yet there were members within this organization who felt that the Subdivision could do more. For example, one member spoke of the Catholic women's duty toward Ukrainian ladies, saying these immigrant women "were very anxious to co-operate with the CWL as it would be a means of getting better acquainted and understood."[98] These and similar intentions seldom were translated into action.

One area in which Edmonton club women did become involved was teaching English to the adult foreign-born. At first the organizations provided this service themselves. In 1914, the YWCA ran such a program for immigrant women with members of the Women's University Club volunteering their services as instructors.[99] The Department of Education was operating its own night schools at this time in various mining centers and in the cities of Edmonton, Calgary and Medicine Hat.[100] The Women's University Club invited two instructors from these night schools to address the membership on "Adult Education Among the Foreigners in the Province," in 1916. Officials from the Department, including the Deputy Minister, attended the address and joined in a discussion of the subject afterward.[101]

Many of the classes for adult immigrants were cancelled during the war years. Once peace had been restored, the Women's University Club undertook a study of "the problems connected with the education of our non-Canadian population."[102] Talks on different phases of the subject were delivered at a special meeting of the Club, and a resolution was passed which empowered the education committee to approach the Edmonton Public School Board with a request that it reopen classes for adult foreigners in the fall. Other local organizations, including the Women's Canadian Club and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE, were encouraged to lay similar requests before the Board.[103] The Women's Canadian Club responded by approaching both the Minister of Education and the School Board concerning the matter. The School Board communicated to the Club that classes for adult foreigners would indeed be reopened in the coming term, and the Minister wrote to say that "an additional vote had been placed in the estimates" to provide for these classes in urban and rural districts.[104] The

Municipal Chapter of the IODE became involved in the scheme when it was asked by the Edmonton Public School Board to help advertize the classes among foreigners. Accordingly, a Committee for the Education of the Adult Foreigner was struck to enlist registrants, and members translated notices publicizing the classes into five foreign languages. These notices were then slipped into books in the public library.[105]

Once evening classes for adult immigrants had been established in Edmonton in 1919, women in organizations involved themselves no further. Their focus shifted instead to the children of the foreign-born, particularly those living in rural districts. The primaries under the Municipal Chapter of the IODE became much absorbed in this work, sending out libraries, "adopting" schools, and sponsoring scholarships for the teachers of immigrant children. The Department of Education continued to promote evening classes. In 1921, F.S. Carr, Supervisor of Schools Among New Canadians, instituted a campaign to convince the Boards of Trustees for new Canadian schools to establish evening classes for the adult immigrants in their areas. Carr reported that the response to the campaign had been "very good," and that there had been a "satisfactory" increase in the number of schools conducting evening classes.[106]

It is difficult to gage the extent to which the adult foreign-born may have been "Canadianized" through the medium of evening classes. A school inspector for the Saskatchewan Department of Education proffered the view that immigrants who came to Canada after they had reached maturity "will never become true Canadian citizens, imbued with the highest Anglo-Saxon ideals. This should not, in fact, be expected of them."[107] Surely immigrant peoples could sense Anglo-Saxon hostility toward them. Negative, insensitive opinions such as those expressed by Emily Murphy, possibly were indicative of the underlying sentiments held by many. A prominent American historian of ethnic and minority groups has suggested that immigrants simply gave the appearance of ignoring racist and ethnocentric barbs, that they treated such remarks as the "trade-offs" necessary to gaining a better, more economically sound life in America.

For this reason, they may have "nodded their heads in apparent approval at the most asinine and insulting adult education and citizenship lecture at the evening school."[108] In Alberta, the trade-off for immigrants was a working knowledge of the English language, something that they would require if they were to continue to live and work in the province.

Immigration to Canada ceased almost entirely during the Depression decade, starting in 1930 when Prime Minister Bennett cancelled the Railways Agreement. Thenceforth, club women looked to the "naturalization" of immigrants who had completed the five year residency requirement and were eligible for Canadian and Imperial citizenship.[109] Beginning in 1933, the Immigration and Assimilation Committee of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE wrote to the National Chapter for a supply of welcome cards. These were then presented to newly naturalized citizens at a ceremony held during Sports Day, (on the first of July), at the South Side Athletic Grounds.[110] The Municipal Chapter also mailed welcome cards, fifteen hundred of them in 1934, to naturalized settlers in rural districts.[111] The Sports Day ceremony continued as an annual event until 1938. While the Municipal Chapter attempted to focus upon the positive aspects of naturalization, its sister organization, the Women's Canadian Club, was more mean tempered. It objected to the numbers of aliens who were naturalized even though they were unable to recite the oath of allegiance in English or French.[112] The views of the Canadian Club reflected the unsympathetic mood of Albertans toward immigration in the 1930s.

Adult education among the foreign-born was not a major preoccupation of Edmonton club women in the inter-war period. Apart from their efforts in 1919 to have the Edmonton Public School Board resume its English classes, club women seldom raised the issue. Several reasons may account for this including the fact that the adult education movement was a relatively new phenomenon, and the attention of the middle class was fixed upon how it might potentially benefit from the offerings. There was a hostility, even a revulsion, to non-British foreigners which was rooted in the fear that they presented a threat to the Anglo-Saxon culture and institutions. Club women were not anxious to have any real interaction with them and besides, the foreign-born were difficult to reach. Many of them resided in rural block settlements, and those of the cities lived in their own immigrant districts. It was left to the Department of Education to promote adult education among foreigners, which it did by providing evening classes for them. The children of immigrants were accessible to the middle class because they attended schools. Club women, therefore, focussed upon Canadianizing them, and hoped that the effects would permeate through the childrens' entire families.

Club members were more interested in vocational training, particularly domestic service classes for unemployed women. While clubs did conduct classes themselves, the most ambitious courses were carried out in conjunction with the Department of Education under the auspices of the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Program. Representatives from several prominent women's organizations served on the co-ordinating committee for the Edmonton domestic service program, the classes were held at a hostel for domestics which was financed by the Catholic Women's League, and the Home Economics Association provided the instruction. The fact that urban, middle class club women were among the more typical employers of domestics accounts for their involvement in this area of vocational training.

The massive unemployment of the Depression years led many Albertans to support vocational education for adults and adolescents. Yet most of the growth in vocational training took place prior to the Depression, and even that was limited. Apart from a broadening of course offerings in the early 1920s to accommodate less academically inclined students, and the erection of two technical high schools in the province, one in 1919 and the other in 1929, the provision for adolescents was minimal. The progressive innovations of the latter 1930s placed some emphasis upon vocational training and academic learning, but the overall intention or purpose of education became much broader in that it sought to endow children with the means to life. In principle, training for leisure activities and for democratic, co-operative social relationships became as important as academic learning and, at least in the elementary and intermediate grades, more important than occupational training. Certainly in high school a vocational thrust became more apparent through the general, technical, and commercial electives. However, in the intermediate grades, which marked the end of formal schooling for the majority of children, vocational education was minimized and confined to exploratory and prevocational electives.

Organizations provided women with the means to continue or extend their education in an informal, supportive environment. This was the underlying purpose behind the founding of every women's organization. Members of the Edmonton clubs studied a variety of issues in the inter-war years. Many were child-related and pertained to education, health, and welfare. Other topics were adult-oriented and included politics, global affairs, labor, and the economy. The importance of adult self-education to club women cannot be overemphasized. It formed the basis of all their reform endeavors. When Dr. Donalda Dickie, one of the architects of Alberta's progressive innovations, addressed the Women's Canadian Club in 1938 on "The New Movement in Education," she told the assembled membership that education was now perceived to be "a process that goes on constantly, as long as a person is alive."[113] As an active club woman herself, Dickie knew that she was preaching to the converted. These women had long ago discovered and acted on the belief that through their organizations they could satisfy their own needs for personal growth. Thus both with respect to their own continuing education and their efforts to promote better conditions for Alberta's children, Edmonton club women shared a philosophical perspective which was congruent with the educational ideas being promulgated by the leading school authorities of the period.

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[1] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 162.

[2] Nancy M. Sheehan, "National Issues and Curricula Issues: Women and Educational Reform, 1900-1930," in Women and Education, pp. 223-224.

[3] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 23 April 1923.

[4] Ibid.

[5] See Bosetti, "The Rural Women's University," for an examination of the ways in which local branches of the Alberta Women's Institute pursued self-education from 1909 through the inter-war period, and L.J. Wilson, "Educational Role of the United Farm Women of Alberta," in Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West, eds. David C. Jones, Nancy M. Sheehan, and Robert M. Stamp (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1979).

[6] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Constitution, 1927.

[7] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 20 April 1932.

[8] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 11 October 1913.

[9] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 15 January 1920.

[10] J.L. Finlay and D.N. Sprague, The Structure of Canadian History, 2nd ed. (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1984), p. 332; Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 24 September 1923.

[11] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 26 October 1927.

[12] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 18 April 1929.

[13] Ibid., Minutes of 10 November 1927.

[14] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, pp. 70-71.

[15] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 6 January 1928.

[16] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 18 March 1930; Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 286.

[17] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 18 November 1931.

[18] Ibid., Minutes of 3 December 1931.

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[19] Ibid., Newspaper article of 22 February 1932.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., Minutes of 11 December 1931.

[22] Ibid, Minutes of 28 August 1933 and 2 December 1933.

[23] Ibid., Newspaper article of 12 March 1932.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., Newspaper article of 7 February 1934.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., Newspaper article of 15 January 1935.

[29] Ibid.

[30] The exception was the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club. Comprised of journalists and writers, it is probable that in their professional capacity these women followed the events of World War II closely. However, when they gathered for Club meetings they determined that the hostilities would not preoccupy their thoughts. In the words of the secretary: "The year [1940] opened for us, as indeed it did for all, with the shadow of the war flung like a dark mantle across the world, but right from the start we determined to have a merry time this year - and we have. 'If there's to be a war,' we said in effect, 'all right, let there be one. We'll keep right on with our work and with our play and we'll try more than ever to make it mean something of value to us.' And so we did !" Club meetings became a social outlet for members during the war years. Source: Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, Minutes of January 1941.

[31] Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, Newspaper article of March 1927.

[32] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 27 November 1933.

[33] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 28 October 1936.

[34] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 21 November 1935.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Thompson and Seager, Canada; 1922-1939, p. 71.

[37] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 18 November 1931.

[38] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 3 March 1914.

[39] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 19 May 1923.

[40] Ibid., Minutes of 30 October 1933 and 28 October 1940.

[41] AR 1935, p. 14.

[42] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 1 March 1934.

[43] Ibid., Minutes of 8 January 1936.

[44] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 21 April 1937 and 11 April 1939.

[45] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report entitled "Adult Education in Canada," February 1937.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Revision of the High School Programme Dec. 1942, p. 8.

[53] Newland, "Education Grows Up," p. 7.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province, p. 119.

[56] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Correspondence from the Medicine Hat Women's University Club, 29 December 1943 and 8 April 1944.

[57] Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province, p. 119.

[58] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Report of the Vocations Committee, 1930-1931.

[59] Ibid., Report of the Vocations Committee, 1931-1932.

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[60] Ibid., Minutes of 8 May 1933 and 9 December 1933.

[61] Genevieve Leslie, "Domestic Service in Canada, 1880-1920," in Women at Work: Ontario, 1850-1930, eds Janice Acton, Penny Goldsmith, and Bonnie Shepard (Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974), pp. 85-87.

[62] Lori Rotenberg, "The Wayward Worker: Toronto's Prostitute at the Turn of the Century," in Women at Work, p. 39.

[63] Leslie, "Domestic Service in Canada," p. 71.

[64] Leslie, "Domestic Service in Canada," p. 95, and Jennifer Stoddart and Veronica Strong-Boag, ". . . And Things Were Going Wrong at Home," Atlantis vol. 1, no. 1 (Fall 1975): 39.

[65] Marilyn Barber, "The Women Ontario Welcomed: Immigrant Domestics for Ontario Homes, 1870-1930," in The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, Volume 2, eds. Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1985), pp. 102, 104-105.

[66] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, pp. 221-222.

[67] Barber, "The Women Ontario Welcomed," p. 120.

[68] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 30 November 1936.

[69] Ibid., Minutes of April 1937.

[70] AR 1938, p. 9.

[71] Ibid.

[72] AR 1939, pp. 12-13 and AR 1940, pp. 7-8.

[73] AR 1938, p. 9.

[74] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 11 February 1930 and 27 April 1930.

[75] Ibid., Minutes of 17 December 1928.

[76] Ibid., Newspaper article of 12 February 1929.

[77] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 12 October 1937.

[78] Edmonton Home Economics Association, Minutes of 21 March 1938.

[79] AR 1940, p. 8.

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[80] AR 1939, p. 7 and Sheehan, "Education, the Society and the Curriculum in Alberta," p. 48.

[81] The Technical Education Act featured a shared fifty-fifty cost arrangement between the Dominion government and the provinces.

[82] AR 1932, p. 10.

[83] Tomkins, A Common Countenance, p. 167.

[84] AR 1936, p. 14 and AR 1937, pp. 17-18.

[85] Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, p. 245.

[86] Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1982), p. 72.

[87] Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, p. 247.

[88] Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p. 95.

[89] Whereas Canada welcomed 1.8 million immigrants between 1911 and 1921, and a further 1.2 million between 1921 and 1931, only 140,000 were permitted to enter the country from 1931 to 1941. Source: Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, p. 248.

[90] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, "A Summary of the History of the Women's Canadian Club."

[91] Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club, "Club Women's Records, Edmonton," 1916 (Provincial Archives of Alberta, acc. no. 75.161), p. 16.

[92] Provincial Board of Health, "Alberta Health Bulletin," March 1919, p. 6.

[93] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 4 May 1929.

[94] Ibid., Newspaper article of 13 January 1928.

[95] Ibid.

[96] AR 1929, p. 10.

[97] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 30 October 1929.

[98] Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, Minutes of 19 July 1922.

[99] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 14 February 1914.

[100] J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian: A Treatise on Canada's Greatest Educational Problem (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1918), p. 98.

[101] Women's University Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 1 November 1916 and 9 December 1916.

[102] Ibid., Annual Report of the Education Committee, May 1919.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 9 May 1919 and 9 September 1919.

[105] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 9 October 1919 and 13 November 1919.

[106] AR 1921, p. 22.

[107] Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian, p. 8.

[108] William J. Reese, "Neither Victims Nor Masters: Ethnic and Minority Study," in Historical Inquiry in Education, p. 237. Americanization programs for the foreign-born became popular in the United States between 1900 and 1929. In the estimation of John Minnis, "They stand out as strong expressions of progressive idealism and utilitarianism and mark an important development in the history of adult education." Source: Minnis, "The Influence of Progressive Thought on the Theory and Practice of Adult Education," p. 133.

[109] Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian, p. 7.

[110] Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE, Minutes of 8 May 1933 and 11 September 1933.

[111] Ibid., Minutes of 10 December 1934.

[112] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Minutes of 28 August 1935.

[113] Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton, Newspaper article of 28 January 1938.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The inter-war years have been dubbed the "decades of discord" in Canadian history.[1] Political ferment, wildly fluctuating economic conditions, and a transformation in social patterns are but some of the factors which gave rise to this characterization. Women's organizations continually pointed to the rapidly changing society and the need to equip young people with the appropriate knowledge and skills to meet effectively an unpredictable future. New political forces were at work in the period. The federal election of 1921 disrupted the dual-party system and the tradition of majority government with the successful entry of "Canada's first significant third party," the Progressives.[2] Although it was the Liberal party that proved victorious in this election, with a win of one hundred and sixteen seats, the Progressives managed to attain sixty-four seats, which was well ahead of the Conservative showing of only fifty seats. Support for the Progressive party reflected a regional concentration, since nearly all of its elected members were from Ontario and the Prairie Provinces. In fact, the Progressive movement was "the focus of prairie reform activity and ideological debate" for most of the 1920s.[3]

At the provincial level, the progressive movement proved strong enough to elect "third party" governments in Ontario (1919), Alberta (1921), and Manitoba (1922).[4] The United Farmers of Alberta won office as a result of the post-war "farmers' revolt," their re-election in 1926 and 1930 was a manifestation of the ongoing activity of the farm movement and the electorate's general satisfaction with the government's administrative record. The crisis of the Depression and Albertans' anger with the perceived failure of a capitalist economy ended the UFA's career in office. In what has been termed "the most sensational Canadian political event of the 1930s," the Alberta election of 1936, the Social Credit party ousted the UFA from power by winning fifty-six of sixty-three seats in the legislature.[5] Not a single UFA member was elected.

Political upheaval was matched in the inter-war period by wildly fluctuating economic conditions. A post-war depression, marked by significant unemployment and inflation, gave way in the mid-1920s to a period of recovery. The western economy was then flattened in the Great Depression through combined drought, low agricultural prices, failed foreign markets, and urban poverty. It did not begin to recover until the outbreak of the Second World War.[6]

Families were transformed in the inter-war period. A declining birth rate meant that the average number of children in Canadian families had diminished to three rather than five or six.[7] These smaller households tended to center almost exclusively upon the care and rearing of children whereas previously they also had functioned as units of production. During the period of economic recovery in the mid-1920s, it became possible for male workers to support their families on their single salaries, so that for the first time in Canadian history the "family wage" was becoming a distinct possibility.[8] While men were out earning the family income, the role of married women within the family changed. Through the correct application of the principles of scientific management to the household, women were expected to have more time to devote to their children and husbands. Under their care, the home was to become a haven from the complexities of a rapidly changing society.[9]

The way in which women performed their role within the family was subjected to intense scrutiny and pressure in the 1920s and 1930s. New childcare authorities, trained in the fields of medicine, psychology, social welfare, and education positively deluged women with unending prescriptions concerning the latest scientific methods for mothering. By utilizing the channels of "popular articles, well-baby clinics, radio talks to mothers, pamphlets produced by governments and businesses, visits by public health nurses, and lectures to women's organizations," these authorities were able to reach large numbers of Canadian women.[10] The advice they offered was educational, and it touched upon every aspect of childcare and rearing from infancy through to adolescence. Yet the ultimate responsibility for any successes or failures in the physical, mental, or social adjustment of children rested with the mother alone.[11] In the inter-war period, mothering was well on its way to becoming a full-time occupation.

The rise of rural-based political parties, extreme economic fluctuation, and changes in family patterns and childrearing methods are illustrative of the many factors which contributed to the turbulence of the inter-war years. Numerous additional forces can be identified, including the decline of the Social Gospel and an attendant transformation in social reform thought, the solidification of Westerners' sense of regional identity and alienation from Eastern Canada, immigration, and the introduction of new mediums for the dissemination of mass information. Together, these forces succeeded in opening inter-war Canada to a host of diverse, competing, and sometimes, conflicting ideas.

This study has centered upon an examination of the inter-war ideas and activities of six Edmonton women's organizations on certain key reform issues of the period. Specifically, these were the child-centered concerns of education, health and welfare, as well as the issue of education for adults within a democratic society. Four principal questions served to guide the framing of this study; each will now be considered in turn.

1. Did urban club women of the early twentieth century in urban Alberta show any common concerns about societal improvement through betterment of education, health and welfare conditions of children and enrichment of adult learning opportunities and, additionally, did they share common ideas, beliefs and interests in relation to these reform concerns?

Generally, all of the Edmonton women's organizations were interested in child-centered reform and adult education. However, because these organizations represented a cross section of women, rather than a single homogeneous group, there was bound to be variations in their degree of interest in any particular issue. The Women's University Club considered itself to be the educational voice among club women in Edmonton, and in many respects, it did tend to fulfill this role. The Club characteristically undertook comprehensive studies of issues in, for example, education, juvenile delinquency, or children's film, which it then shared with other organizations. The Women's Canadian Club, through its guest speakers, provided a forum for the presentation of viewpoints on a multitude of issues pertaining to education, health, and current events. The focus of the Edmonton Home Economics Association was centered upon health and education concerns, especially in relation to childhood nutrition and training for household occupations. The Canadian Women's Press Club exhibited an interest in issues of education concerning children and adults. Both the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE and the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL inclined toward similar interests, but with sometimes differing perspectives, in education and welfare work. The IODE tended to act on behalf of Protestant children and the Public Schools, whereas the CWL usually concentrated upon Catholic children and the Separate Schools. Although variations existed between them, together the Edmonton club women's education, health, and welfare interests contributed to the formulation of kinder, more empathetic attitudes toward children.

Their own informal education pursuits enhanced members' knowledge of child-related and societal issues which, in turn, often led to the identification of reform initiatives.

Some Edmonton women's organizations assumed areas of responsibility which were honored by the others. As already indicated, the Women's University Club provided educational leadership, which included the responsibility of supplying informed viewpoints based upon extensive background studies. The Edmonton Home Economics Association was a highly specialized organization which dealt with nearly all matters pertaining to its area of expertise. When the Municipal Chapter of the IODE became involved in providing school supplies to the children of settlers and adopting rural schools, the other organizations made a point of directing inquiries to the Municipal Chapter rather than intruding upon these responsibilities themselves. In this way the clubs were able to avoid duplication of effort and attend to a broader range of needs on behalf of children and adults.

Conversely, it was not uncommon for an organization to solicit the interest and support of the others in bringing about intended purposes. Several examples abound. In the latter 1930s, the Women's University Club attempted to convince a local radio station to produce a radio program for children. Many women's organizations joined in pursuing the matter including the Municipal Chapter of the IODE, the Women's Musical Club, and the Local Council of Women representing fourteen affiliated clubs. A second example concerns the Red Cross Society when, shortly after World War I, it attempted to coordinate relief efforts through the creation of a central information bureau. Various societies and women's organizations were to refer to the bureau whenever they received applications for aid from soldiers and their families. The Women's Canadian Club, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL, and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE each became involved in this effort. A third example relates to an educational program for domestic servants carried out under the auspices of the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Program between 1937 and 1940.

Although funds for the program emanated from government sources, the Catholic Women's League supplied the facility, the Edmonton Home Economics Association provided instruction, and members of the Women's Canadian Club and the Municipal Chapter of the IODE served as representatives on the co-ordinating committee.

The interests of Edmonton women's organizations often coincided with those of Alberta's rural women's organizations. For example, in the mid-1930s, both the UFWA and the Edmonton Local Council of Women raised the issue of providing birth control clinics for married women. Most of the organizations affiliated with the LCW, including the Women's University Club, supported this measure. However, this example of women's organizations working together to bring about intended purposes highlights the fact that occasionally, there was division amongst the organizations. In this circumstance, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL was vehemently opposed to the creation of a birth control clinic. This organization even severed ties with the LCW for a few years as a gesture of protest. Yet it should be emphasized that division between the Edmonton women's organizations was by no means the norm. In fact, by the inter-war years, these organizations tended to operate as a network, with interconnected memberships, shared research findings, and nonduplication of effort.[12]

2. *Did reform oriented urban club women see and attempt to use the school as a center for reform activity?*

First of all, before considering urban club women's views on the subject, it is important to emphasize the findings of Chapter II, which indicated that the inter-war period witnessed extensive reforms within the Alberta school system. Expanding attendance figures, coupled with the new educational requirements of a post-war and then a depression economy, and emergent ideas on childhood were some of the factors which led to changes in the philosophy and purpose of the province's schools. The most extensive reforms were introduced in the 1930s and related to a child-centered philosophy in the elementary and intermediate grades, a strategy for accommodating burgeoning enrollments at the high school level, and improved educational opportunities for rural youth. While the ideas and practices of progressive education manifested themselves in the school systems of every province, Canadians tended to be conservative in their commitment and selective in their reforms. Even in Alberta, where the ideas of the new education appeared to have sustained their deepest impact, educators insisted that their programs had been developed according to the specific needs and conditions of the province.

At the elementary level, a child-centered philosophy was adopted in which children's emotional, social, and personality development became as important as their intellectual growth. To this end, the aims of the elementary program were restructured to promote physical and mental health, social adjustment to large groups, desirable attitudes and appreciations in the emotions, intellectual capacities, leisure activities, participatory learning, and a progressive orientation to life and the community. The enterprise procedure, based upon subject integration and co-operative group activities, formed the cornerstone of the new program, but it was highly customized to meet conditions in Alberta. While the usual "learning-by-doing," and experience-related activities were present, an equal emphasis was placed upon preparing the child for his future role and responsibility in a democratic society.

The intermediate school was an entirely new innovation which recognized early adolescence, the thirteen through fifteen age group, as a distinct stage in childhood development. Much of the program was a continuation of that begun at the elementary level insofar as the enterprise procedure was employed, the whole child was educated, and dedication to the ideals of democracy was fostered. The intermediate school served two groups of students, those who would continue to high school, and those who would leave school at some point between grades VII and IX. It was intended that the program not differentiate between these groups. The curriculum was comprised of a core of compulsory subjects together with cultural, exploratory, and prevocational electives. The only formal examination was administered at the end of grade IX, and it was used in conjunction with records on students' mental abilities, aptitudes, and personalities in determining their eligibility for different high school programs.

The high school also underwent a restructuring in an effort to meet the more diversified needs and capabilities of an expanding student population. All students were compelled to take a prescribed core of subjects, but the introduction of academic, commercial, technical, and general electives was intended to make education more relevant to greater numbers. The idea of introducing additional progressive elements into the high school program, particularly the experience curriculum, was entertained, although not adopted, in the early 1940s. Albertans preferred that the high school confine itself to training for vocations, leisure, and democratic citizenship.

Other reforms of the thirties were intended to improve educational opportunities for rural children. A special legislative committee, chaired by the Hon. Perren Baker, Minister of Education, conducted a study of the rural education problem in 1934. Its report advocated a child-centered, activity program for rural elementary schools, and a reorganization to large units of administration, or school divisions. This reorganization proceeded rapidly in the latter 1930s, and led to a variety of improvements including increased secondary school facilities, a wider variation in course offerings, and a better qualified teaching force. These innovations were augmented by the implementation and extension of new distance delivery systems. Correspondence courses had been initiated in the 1920s for grades I to VIII students living in isolated regions outside school districts, but towards the end of the inter-war period, Divisional Boards began making significant use of correspondence courses to provide rural students with a high school education. At the same time, the Department of Education initiated radio broadcasts pertaining to music, social studies, science, and literature for rural schools.

Teacher training programs underwent fundamental changes in the 1930s. Normal school admission standards were raised, quotas were set in place, the program was restructured, and certification requirements were made more stringent. The responsibility for training high school teachers was transferred from the normal schools to the University of Alberta's School of Education. In order that immediate needs were met, the annual summer school for teachers began offering courses in the new educational techniques; many were taught by American instructors who were familiar with the enterprise procedure. One of the more significant changes was wrought in 1936, when the Alberta legislature granted professional status to teachers.

New educational ideas became evident in the field of adult education. The American movement, in particular, internalized many of the basic principles of progressive thought including the broadened concept of education, the emphases on the learner and on scientific methodology, the more equitable teacher-learner relationship, and the reconstructionist vision of education as an agent of social change. Formal adult education experienced limited development in inter-war Alberta. Although adult technical and vocational education appeared to have gained a firm basis in the 1920s, with two major training institutions and mounting enrollments, severe financial strains curbed the extension of these services in the Depression years. The developments that did occur in adult education, and they were significant, tended to follow informal channels. The Edmonton women's organizations were major participants.

The new education, as it appeared in Alberta schools, was the result of a combination of forces, the most obvious of which was the interest and commitment of officials within the Department of Education. Post-war pressures, economic conditions, and changing social attitudes toward children on the part of the urban middle class also contributed to the climate for change. The education and socially related interests of Edmonton club women, as a multi-dimensional segment of the urban middle class, tended to coincide with the on-going concerns affecting schools.

In fact, the discussion in Chapter III revealed that these urban women often attempted to use the school as a center for reform activity. Several issues brought the club members into interaction with the schools. Since prairie society was in a continuous state of change, it was important that the curricula taught to schoolchildren was current and relevant. The Women's University Club attempted to monitor this through conducting its own independent investigations of courses, and by serving on the Department of Education's committees for the revision of curricula. The Department also entrusted women's organizations with the responsibility for developing courses. Members of the Edmonton Home Economics Association led the campaign for the introduction of home economics in the schools; it wrote the courses, inspected the teaching facilities, and maintained a constant surveillance over the program.

The Department of Education's inter-war preoccupation with increasing secondary school enrollments was observed by Edmonton club women. Members applauded efforts to extend educational opportunities and even presented their own ideas concerning ways in which this might be done, but they were concerned that academic achievement not be allowed to decline in the process. Their solution was to insist upon an adherence to high examination standards. The women assumed a responsibility for offering encouragement and recognition for scholastic achievement through the presentation of medals and scholarships. Most organizations were involved in these endeavors. However, an incident in the latter 1930s, between the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE and the Department of Education, made it clear that organizations donated scholarships on their own terms, and to fulfill intended purposes which could not be violated.

A nationalist sentiment began to evolve gradually after the First World War. Members of Edmonton women's organizations were among those forced to contemplate whether their primary allegiances belonged with Canada or with the Empire. Disputes erupted in this connection, especially within the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE and its affiliated primaries. Despite the uncertainty, there was one issue which inspired objections amongst nearly all women's organizations; it was the impact of American culture upon Canada. This influence was highly pervasive in the inter-war years, and difficult to combat, but in the case of the schools, the Edmonton club women felt that there was something they could do about it. Their principal method was to scrutinize the textbooks used within the school system, and whenever an American publication was uncovered, to submit a strongly worded protest to the Department of Education. The Department would then substitute the American publication with one produced within the Empire.

Finally, the Edmonton club women's commitment to improving the quality of rural education formed another reason for them to intervene in school affairs. Correspondence courses were one of the distance delivery systems which the Department of Education set in place for rural children. The difficulty was that many settler families could not produce the funds for books and supplies. In these situations, the costs were borne by the Edmonton clubs, with the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE assuming the largest responsibility. Additionally, many rural schools relied upon the Edmonton organizations for libraries and supplies; those in dire need were "adopted" by the IODE. Despite the reorganization to large units of administration in the latter 1930s, rural schools still required club aid in carrying out their educational programs. The Department of Education was dependent upon their continued interest in this field.

Current educational issues and concepts were examined by the Edmonton club women from within their organizations. Their information was derived in education committees and study groups, and through inviting professional educators to address them at meetings. They examined the new educational theories and methodologies, testing techniques, and one organization, the Women's University Club, wrote an extensive report on educational and vocational guidance and its potential applications for Edmonton schools. Child psychology, especially that of the pre-school child, was a favored and recurrent topic among club women. They also were interested in the concepts of democracy and education, education as a lifelong process, and education's dual goals of developing the potential of the individual while at the same time emphasizing his role in community life. Each of these ideas emerged in the school programs of the 1930s.

Members of the Edmonton women's organizations recognized that the quality of their children's education was dependent upon highly qualified teachers who were committed to their profession. To this end club women advocated adequate salaries and stringent training requirements. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL provided job placement services for unemployed teachers, and the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE provided scholarship incentives for those who taught in districts comprised of the foreign born. The Women's University Club led protests against discriminatory practices such as the demotion of female school principals to make way for males, and the disqualification of capable female teachers from pursuing their careers once they married. Their actions were aimed at ensuring that the teaching profession attracted mature individuals who possessed an empathetic view of childhood.

This support for the teaching profession, together with the interaction in school affairs, and the study of educational concepts from within organizations, constituted the Edmonton club women's involvement in Alberta schooling. Their activities indicate not only that they perceived the school as being a center for reform, but also that they were prepared to use the school for this purpose, especially when they intervened or became directly involved in school matters. Occasionally, the club women supported ideas which were contradictory. For example, they applauded the expansion of school programs to accommodate students of varied aptitudes while, at the same time, insisting that rigorous academic standards continued to be upheld. The new child-centered, activity-based philosophy of Alberta's elementary and intermediate schools served to broaden the school's mandate since it became necessary to provide for more than a child's intellectual growth, his or her physical, emotional and social development also assumed importance. This expanded role of the school had repercussions, perhaps unforeseen, for club women, as mothers, in that it shifted many responsibilities of the home to the school. Women's traditional responsibilities for their children's health, morals, values, attitudes, and ideas were, in effect, undermined by the school, the very institution to which the Edmonton club women tended to lend their wholehearted support.

3. Did the ideas and initiatives of urban women in Alberta appear to have relevance or connection to major reform oriented developments and changes of the period?

Inter-war campaigns to improve the education, health and welfare opportunities for Alberta youth represented distinct components of the broader child-centered reform movement which, according to Sutherland, had been building in Canada since the turn-of-the-century as a result of the input and leadership of the urban middle classes. Edmonton club women not only exhibited an interest in this movement, they also functioned within it, in several capacities, as active and vocal participants. Additionally, the Edmonton club women participated in the adult education movement which, as Tomkins has indicated, experienced major growth in Canada in the twenties and thirties.

The discussion in Chapter IV concentrated upon health-related issues. Several historians have noted the pre-1920 contributions of women in organizations to the field of childhood health. The example of Edmonton organizations illustrates that the work continued, unabated, into the inter-war years. Health care professionals commonly addressed meetings in order to relay current developments in the field, outline problems, and encourage members' involvement in instituting the medically approved solutions. These professionals recognized that clubs were a powerful instrument for the dissemination of health information.

Children's physical health was of foremost concern to women in organizations. The Edmonton groups approached the issue through studying childhood nutritional requirements and applying the information within their own homes. They monitored food quality and inspection procedures; when necessary, they distributed food to poor families. Members lobbied, unsuccessfully, for provincially sponsored hot lunch programs in rural schools. It was a rural women's organization, the Women's Institutes, which resolved the matter by preparing and delivering hot lunches to individual rural schools on a daily basis. Club women were familiar with the relationship between nutrition and learning. They understood that dietary deficiencies impaired growth and lowered resistance to disease. The health risk was greatest among schoolaged children who were, of necessity, grouped together within the confines of classrooms. Routine school medical inspections, to detect physical defects and communicable diseases, thus received the endorsement of Edmonton club women. Occasionally, they provided their voluntary assistance in making physical examinations possible.

The Department of Education, together with the Provincial Board of Health, had been endeavoring to extend the system of school medical inspections. In 1918, for example, the School Act required that town school districts provide such inspections at least once per year. Rural schools did not experience the benefits of routine medical inspections until the latter 1930s, when the Department of Education instituted a reorganization to large units of administration. Even then, only a few divisions had introduced the service by the end of the decade. In the majority of schools, it fell to the classroom teacher to examine the health of her students. Curriculum guides for the new elementary program afforded teachers the information on how to conduct these examinations.

A concern for the state of children's mental health evolved gradually among Edmonton club members. The original interest was in the problem of the feeble-minded. According to the beliefs of the day, intimate connections existed between feeble-mindedness and crime, prostitution, illegitimacy, pauperism, alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, and various other societal ills. This combined with immigration, a declining birth rate, and the casualties of the First World War heightened middle class apprehensions concerning the future of the Anglo-Saxon race. Institutionalization was touted as one of the more effective measures in curtailing the problems associated with feeble-mindedness. The Edmonton club women were among those who supported this solution, with the result that an institutional facility was built in Red Deer. Attention turned next to methods of stemming the proliferation of the feeble-minded. It was believed that mentally defective individuals were highly promiscuous, and that the females reproduced their own kind at an alarming rate. Club women tended to support the view that such individuals should be sterilized if they were to remain within the community. By the latter 1920s, public sentiment reflected this position, and in response the UFA government passed the Sexual Sterilization Act, which was designed to prevent procreation by mentally defective persons. The first Board was comprised of two medical practitioners, a representative of the University of Alberta, and a club woman representing the UFWA.

Once the province had made arrangements for the institutionalization and sterilization of mental defectives, club members turned their attentions to the broader aspects of mental hygiene. Early theories held that feeble-mindedness was genetically transmitted; later theories began to explore the possible relationships between environmental factors and mental hygiene. Edmonton women were especially interested in what the mental hygienists, as guest speakers at Women's Canadian Club meetings, had to say with respect to the relationship between parenting techniques and personality disorders in children. For the most part, parents were blamed as being the root cause of their children's mental problems. Since women were the primary care-givers to children, it was they who ultimately were held accountable for any shortcomings in their children's development. The schools, too, reflected the indirect influence of mental hygienist thought in that their programs aimed to mold children's personalities to exhibit the qualities of democratic, socially responsible citizens.

The question of women's health, in relation to their childbearing function, became a prominent point of controversy in the early 1930s, when the Edmonton club women demanded a birth control clinic within their city. Both the distribution of birth control information and the sale of contraceptive devices were prohibited under the Canadian Criminal Code. Insistence upon a birth control clinic was, therefore, a radical measure which captured the full attention of the public. Access to birth control information was perceived by the majority of club women as vital to their physical, mental, and economic well-being. Their indignation and resentment at the deliberate withholding of such knowledge was palpable. The Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League was the dissenting voice on this issue; as a gesture of protest it severed ties with the Local Council of Women. Edmonton club women were unsuccessful in their bid for a birth control clinic, but their actions did serve to notify the medical community and the public of their position. If women were to be expected to assume the responsibility for the care and rearing of children, it was reasonable that they would demand control over when and how often they bore children.

Chapter V analyzed the efforts of women in Edmonton organizations to promote the welfare of children. Part of their work was carried out in conjunction with child protection agencies; the provincial Department of Neglected Children relied extensively upon their unpaid participation. Club members offered aid to children in a variety of circumstances be they living with their parents, within institutions, or in need of foster homes. The organizations extended monetary and material relief to families with children, and they funded shelters for those who were homeless. Delinquent juveniles stirred uncertainties within women's organizations. One group, the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League, contributed extensively to the protection and reformation of wayward girls. Another group, the Women's University Club, undertook a comprehensive examination of the problem of the young offender. Generally, women's organizations limited their interactions with juvenile delinquents, leaving them instead, to the care of the professionally qualified.

The belief was that much delinquent behavior was directly attributable to a want of wholesome childhood distractions, and it was in this realm that club women endeavored to make a contribution. It was a preventive role, one that sought to create environments which would avert children from the path of delinquency. Club projects designed to further this goal included summer camps and winter swimming and gymnastics programs for underprivileged children. Youth auxiliaries of the adult clubs, Girl Guide Companies, and Junior Red Cross branches were organized. Members even supplied hospital entertainment as well as tutoring for sick and handicapped children. The instability and recurrent recessions of the inter-war economy placed expenditures on social and recreational programs for youth at a low priority. If they were to become available at all, it was left to voluntary organizations to provide them.

Social reform thought shifted from a liberal Christian to a secular humanist perspective in the early inter-war period, and the once dominant moral leadership of the clergy declined in the process. It was left to women, especially those within organizations, to carry on their traditional role as the promoters of a moral society. Their abilities were put to the test once the media began its rapid expansion. American domination of mass circulation magazines, motion pictures, and radio was seen as posing a threat to Canadian culture and the morals of youth. Edmonton club women reacted on several fronts. They studied the problems, lodged protests, and formed censorship groups. They promoted alternatives including community theater and films produced in Britain. They lobbied for children's radio programs and better quality motion pictures from Hollywood. Yet it was parental involvement in the activities of their own children that club women endorsed as being the most potent protection against negative moral influences.

Considerable energy was expended by women in Edmonton organizations on behalf of children. Their efforts to enhance the physical and mental well being of children, to shield them from immoral influences, and to provide them with appropriate leisure and recreational opportunities constituted several of the Edmonton women's child-centered reform endeavors. These undertakings at times paralleled concerns and developments in Alberta schools. For example, the views of the child health movement, in which club women were participants, occasionally surfaced in schools in the form of routine medical inspections, separate classes for the feeble-minded, and a consideration for the growth of the whole child, including his physical and personality development. Additionally, some of the areas in which club women conducted child welfare work were predicted as becoming the purview of the schools in the future. For example, in 1944, an official within the Department of Education spoke of extending the school's responsibilities for children's out-of-school activities, of providing summer camp programs, and of promoting children's organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and Junior Red Cross, as a means of abating juvenile delinquency.[13]

Chapter VI charted the involvement of the Edmonton women's organizations in the adult education movement. Their activities were considerable in that members taught other adults in classes and through correspondence courses, they offered vocational training for unemployed women and youth, and they promoted English classes for immigrants. However, the organizations' greatest participation in adult education was on behalf of their own memberships. The educational opportunities afforded by organizations was one of the most important reasons why women chose to join them. Organizations allowed middle class women to continue their own education in environments that were informal, supportive, non-competitive, and accommodating to individuals having only limited periods of leisure time. Such education took place internally, within committees, study groups, and through guest lectures. The topics that members chose to examine were extensive and ranged from child-related issues to literature, history, politics, the economy, labor, and global affairs. The knowledge which women gained through this avenue of informal adult education formed the basis of all their reform endeavors.

Thus, the ideas and initiatives of women in Edmonton organizations were intimately connected both to the child-centered reform movement, in its education, health and welfare aspects, and the adult education movement in force in Canada during the inter-war period. Additionally, club women pursued certain distinctly female interests. Several of the organizations combined resources in the latter 1930s, in conjunction with the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Program, to provide domestic service training for young women. They defended female teachers in cases of gender based discrimination. A women's shelter, Rosary Hall, was created and funded. Finally, both rural and urban organizations sparked a heated public debate when they joined in demanding birth control clinics for married women. While children were of utmost concern to club members, they also made a point of addressing issues which affected the well being of women.

4. Did involvement of women in the clubs of the city provide a meaningful form of public, community involvement?

Inter-war changes in family patterns and the role of married women within families meant that increasingly, it was they, rather than husbands or extended family members, who were responsible for the care and rearing of children. At the same time, the manner in which women performed their maternal role was heavily monitored by other societal members. According to Strong-Boag, a new class of professionals comprised of physicians, psychologists, public health nurses, social workers, educators, and the like, were anxious to establish their own credibility in the field of childcare. In order to do so, they directed concentrated doses of scientific advice and criticism at mothers. Even though much of this information served useful purposes, generally, the actions of these childcare professionals were intrusive, and tended to undermine the authority of women. Cohen also has observed that "parent-blaming" was a common characteristic of mental hygienist thought in the 1920s. Indeed, two guests of the Women's Canadian Club, Dr. William Blatz of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and Dr. Helen MacMurchy, each blamed parents and their childrearing practices as being the root cause of mental disorders in children. Thus it was parents, and more specifically, mothers, who were held accountable for the successes and failures of their children.

Women's interest in and primary responsibility for children led them to the schools and any other community institutions with which children came in contact outside the family. The vehicle through which women approached these institutions was drawn from the female cultural experience of the early twentieth century. It was women's organizations, and they wielded considerable power. In truth, when Edmonton club women addressed education and socially-related issues they expected to be heard. The executive offices in most of the six clubs represented in this study were filled by women who enjoyed a certain degree of prominence in the city. For example, Mrs. John Campbell Bowen, the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, served the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton in the capacity of president, and later honorary president. The wives of Alberta Premiers held executive positions in these clubs. Mrs. A.C. Rutherford, the wife of the first Premier of Alberta, held several executive offices in the Women's University Club of Edmonton and the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton. Mrs. Herbert Greenfield belonged to the Women's Canadian Club and the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club. Mrs.

Arthur Sifton served the Women's Canadian Club as did Mrs. J.E. Brownlee and Mrs. William Aberhart.

At the same time that Mrs. Aberhart's husband was Premier of Alberta, he also assumed the Education portfolio as Minister. This underscores an important point: Edmonton club leaders had direct connections to the top education officials in the province. Usually these connections were through marriage. Mrs. Perren Baker, whose husband was Minister of Education under the United Farmers of Alberta administration, held executive offices in the Women's University Club and the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club. Mrs. J.T. Ross, married to the Deputy Minister of Education, was active in the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire and the Women's University Club. Mrs. Elsie Newland, the wife of Dr. H.C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools, was a leader in the Women's University Club. The wives of the presidents of the University of Alberta tended to hold executive positions in the Edmonton clubs. Mrs. H.M. Tory, Mrs. Robert C. Wallace, and Mrs. W.A.R. Kerr each belonged to the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton. Professor's wives were active. Mrs. Broadus and Mrs. King were presidents of the Women's University Club of Edmonton, and Mrs. Broadus also belonged to the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League.

Marriage was not the sole means by which Edmonton club leaders attained positions of prominence in the city. Nellie McClung was a Member of the Legislative Assembly while she belonged to the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club. Judge Emily Murphy founded the Women's Canadian Club of Edmonton and she belonged to the Press Club. Even more significant in terms of educational influence was Dr. Donalda Dickie. A Normal School instructor, Dr. Dickie played an integral role in the formulation and revision of the courses of study for both the elementary and intermediate schools. Her book *The Enterprise in Theory and Practice* was considered to be the most authoritative Canadian work on the activity program.[14] Dr. Dickie was an active member in both the Press Club and the University Club.

The regular membership of the six Edmonton organizations was predominantly urban middle class. However, special qualifications were required for membership in each of these clubs. Those who belonged to the Women's University Club had degrees from colleges of recognized standing in Canada, Great Britain, or the United States, or they were graduates of medical or legal schools. Members of the Edmonton Home Economics Association had, as a minimum requirement, the equivalent of a junior matriculation certificate and at least one year of training in home economics. To belong to the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Women's Press Club members had to be actively involved in writing and their work had to be published each year. Women's Canadian Club members had to be British born, British subjects, or the wives of British subjects; the same qualifications applied for membership in the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire. Membership in the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the Catholic Women's League required an adherence to the Catholic faith.

It is unlikely that the members of these urban women's organizations felt particularly uncomfortable or intimidated at the prospect of approaching provincial or municipal officials in order to solicit information or air their views. For example, they frequently met with provincial education officials about matters relating to the schools. Since it was the education of children that was at stake, these women, as mothers and guardians of children, believed themselves well justified in demonstrating their interest and concern. They were able to draw strength and direction from the leaders of their organizations who, in many cases, happened to be the spouses of the province's ruling elite. Additionally, these top ranking personnel were known to club members insofar as they frequently attended meetings as speakers and as guests. Therefore, these women were in an excellent position to monitor education and other child-related developments and, if they desired, to provide input to those at the highest levels of decision-making.

The Edmonton club women's involvement in adult or child-related concerns within the community assumed several forms including education, advocacy, and action-oriented initiatives. These women usually began by educating themselves on current issues or trends. For example, they studied child psychology, nutrition, increasing school enrollments, the young offender, provincial adult education provisions, children's film, educational systems in Canada and abroad, and educational and vocational guidance. These studies were conducted from within their organizations in education committees, study groups, and through guest lectures. The information thus gained formed the basis of all their advocacy and action plans.

Club women lent their support to numerous measures designed to enhance the education, health, and morals of children and adults. They advocated English classes for the foreign-born, school medical inspections and better nutrition through hot lunch programs, and the production of higher quality children's film and radio. For the "unfit" or "feeble-minded," club women supported institutionalization, sterilization, and elimination from school classrooms. Resolutions also were routinely sent to the appropriate agencies in order to insist upon high academic standards in the schools, or textbooks which did not convey an American point of view. Resolutions protesting the circulation of American magazines through the Canadian mail system even were instrumental in the eventual introduction of a government tariff on American publications entering the country.

There were several instances in which the Edmonton club women resorted to direct action or involvement in bringing about conditions for children or adults which were considered desirable. Child welfare was one area of extensive involvement. Child-saving in Alberta operated through a combination of provincial, municipal, and volunteer effort, with the Department of Neglected Children assuming final authority.

This system was heavily dependent upon the voluntary assistance of the Edmonton club women, whether in finding or providing foster homes for children, donating funds to the Children's Aid Boarding Home, or serving on the advisory board of the Children's Aid Society. Additionally, club members operated their own projects for children in the form of junior clubs, hospital tutoring and entertainment for the sick and the handicapped, and summer camps for the financially disadvantaged. The Edmonton club women took action in other areas as well. They acted as film censors, they served on school curriculum planning committees and wrote school courses in domestic science. The Department of Education depended upon their provision of school supplies to rural schools and to rural children; it even participated in directing requests for such aid to the women's organizations. These women also taught other adults through the provision of lectures, workshops, clinics, and correspondence courses. Their use of education, advocacy, and action plans, together with the influence that they commanded through, among other things, prominent family connections, amounted to considerable input and public involvement in the adult and child-related concerns of the day.

There is a view, generally held, that the women's movement in Canada dissipated once women attained the vote. For example, John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager in *Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord* argued that women's suffrage did not "stir up a whirlwind of new reform legislation," as expected.[15] The fear of a massive women's vote proved groundless since women tended to divide their votes among the different political parties in much the same proportions as men: "Rather than voting according to sex, women voted as members of a class, region, or ethnic group."[16] Carol Bacchi's examination of women's suffrage organizations in *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918* led her to the conclusion that the feminists who gained control of the suffrage movement were really social reformers first, and that voting to them "meant housekeeping on a municipal, provincial, or federal level, nothing more."[17] According to Alison Prentice and her co-authors in *Canadian Women: A History,* this belief in the Canadian women's movement having disappeared after the achievement of suffrage may be attributable to the circumstance that there are not many studies of women's organizations after the First World War. It is the earlier period, between 1850 and 1918, that has received more extensive attention from historians of women. However, the belief does need to be challenged. Prentice has suggested that a "careful reconstruction of the activities and issues that women's organizations pursued during the inter-war years is beginning to reveal that, on the contrary, many groups continued to work actively for the transformation of Canadian society in accordance with feminist principles."[18]

This study has demonstrated that the Edmonton club women routinely used their influence and initiative to provide input into reforms associated with children and adults. The fact that they did so during the inter-war period casts doubt upon the assumption that the women's movement faltered dramatically once suffrage was won. Since women neither entered politics in great numbers, nor voted en masse on issues that were of concern to them, the inference sometimes has been drawn that the movement's reform impulse subsided. Yet other interpretations may be equally plausible. There is the possibility, for example, that women tended to eschew male political structures because they perceived that their opportunities for success within them were limited. Women with political aspirations characteristically were not nominated to run in strong party ridings and, even if elected, they were not entrusted with much power. The evidence in this study suggests that women's reform endeavors continued apace after they had won the vote, but that their successes were achieved through their own traditional female structures of organizations. Although the reforms were not necessarily legislative, they were substantial, they were progressive, and they resulted in improvements in the lives of women and children.

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[1] From the title of John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager's work, Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord.

[2] Ibid., p. 37.

[3] Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, p. 367.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 235.

[6] Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, pp. 382-383.

[7] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 153.

[8] Prentice, Canadian Women, p. 214.

[9] Ibid., p. 217.

[10] Ibid., p. 248.

[11] Ibid., pp. 248-251.

[12] Membership lists from the six Edmonton women's organizations indicate that there were striking membership interconnections between the Women's Canadian Club, the Edmonton Home Economics Association, the Canadian Women's Press Club, and the Women's University Club. While members of the Edmonton Municipal Chapter of the IODE and the Edmonton Senior Subdivision of the CWL tended not to belong to eachother's organizations, they too were interconnected through their membership in each of the other four organizations.

[13] Newland, "Education Grows Up," pp. 5-6.

[14] Nancy M. Sheehan, "Education, the Society and the Curriculum in Alberta, 1905-1980: An Overview" in Schools in the West: Essays in Canadian Educational History, eds. Nancy M. Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1986), p. 44. It should be noted that although Dickie's The Enterprise in Theory and Practice (Toronto: W.J. Gage & Co., Limited, 1940), was significant as a *Canadian* source on the activity program, records from Gage Publishing Limited indicate that sales of this book were not particularly high. Between 1940 and 1945, a total of 3,210 copies were sold; only 320 additional copies were sold

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over the next seventeen year period. Source: Project Yesteryear, Dr. Robert S. Patterson, Director.

[15] Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922-1939, p. 70.

[16] Ibid., p. 71.

[17] Bacchi, Liberation Deferred?, p. 33.

[18] Prentice, et al., Canadian Women, p. 217.

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